JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

Bandits and bullies both relied on his sense of fair play. When, as a boy, he tended to pet animals rather than play with his toys, people thought he was simple-headed. It was this spirit of kindness, however, that guided his lifelong fight against injustice and inequality. The rough and tumble of political life may have bewildered him, but the country recognised in Jayaprakash Narayan an honest, brilliant and selfless Gandhian.

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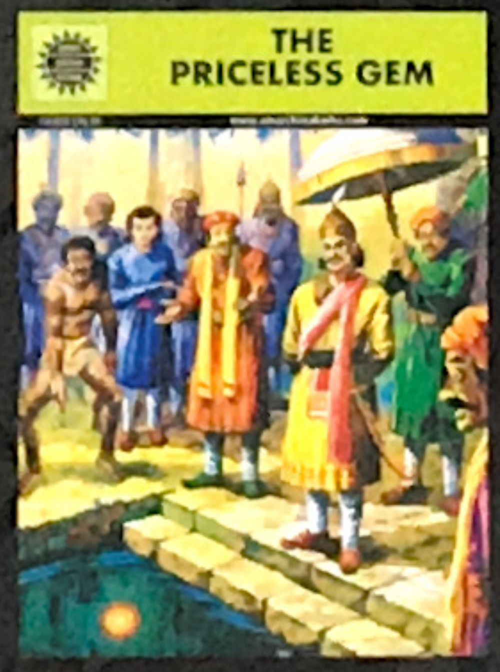
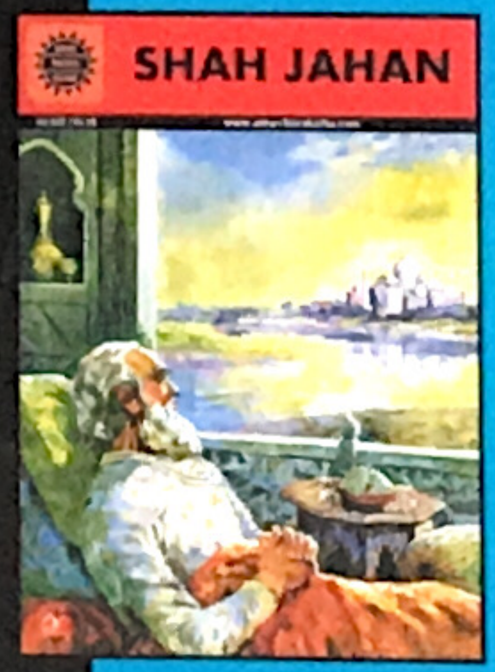


FABLES & HUMOUR



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AMAR CHITRA KATHA

JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

A SOLDIER FOR JUSTICE

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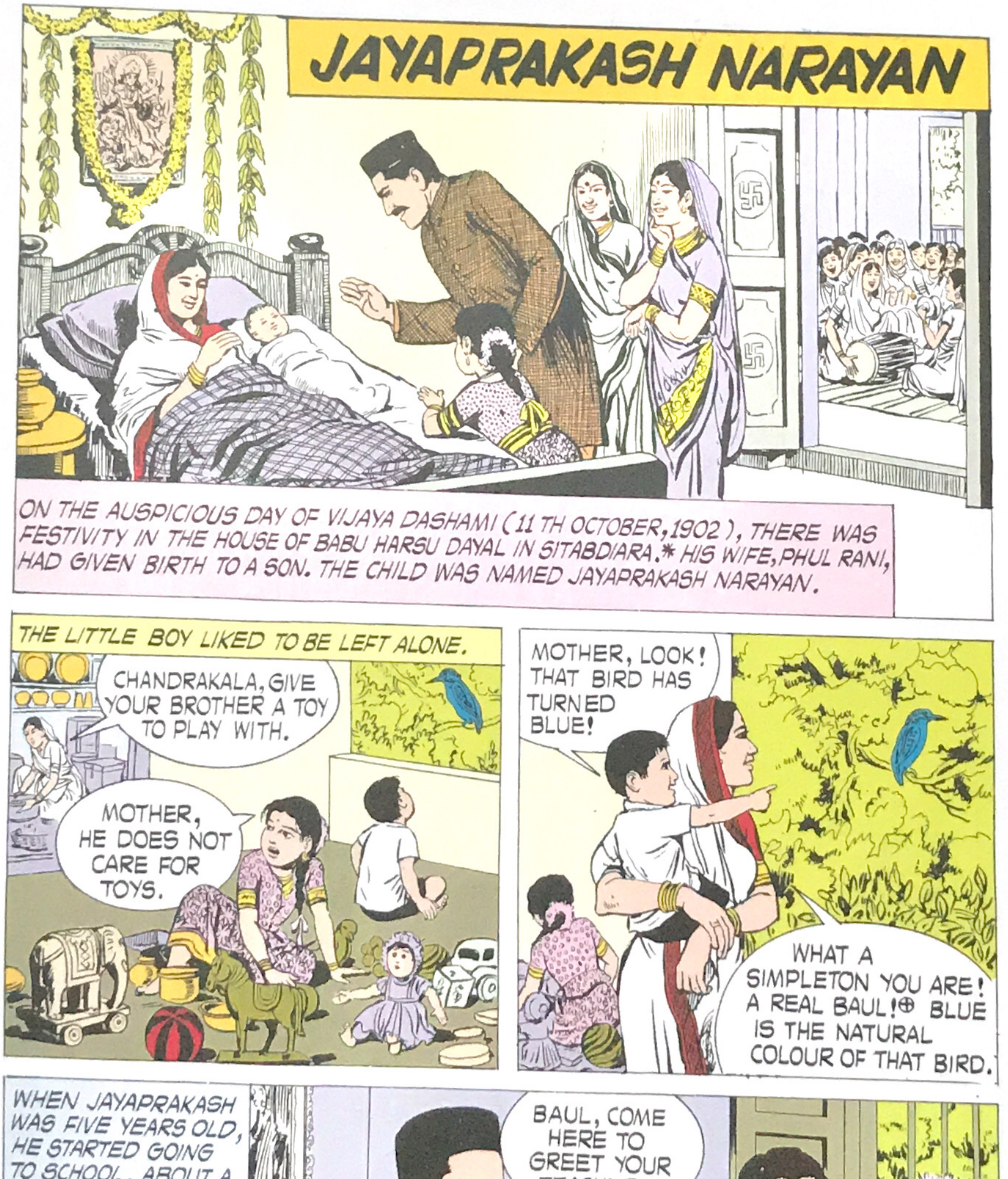
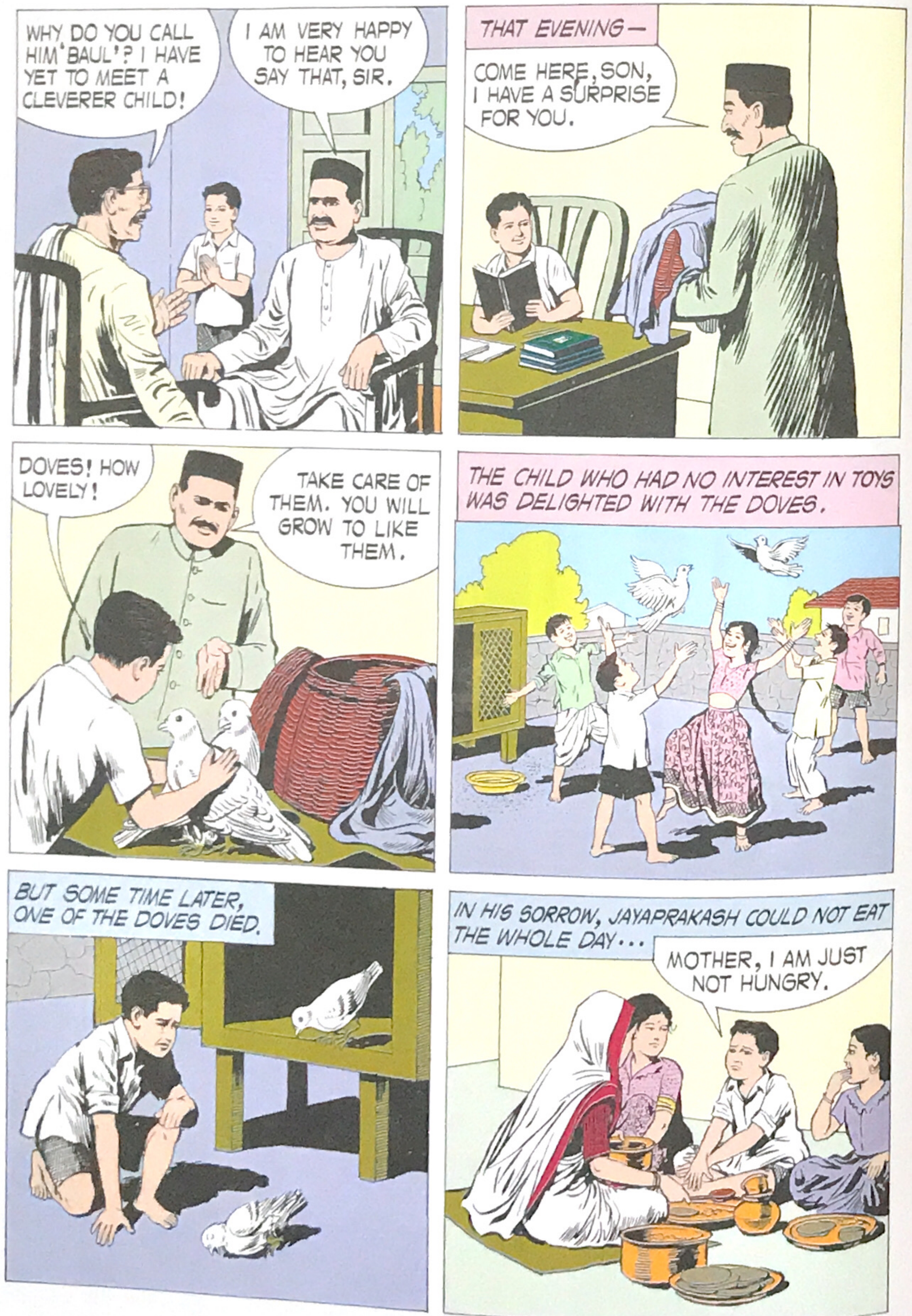
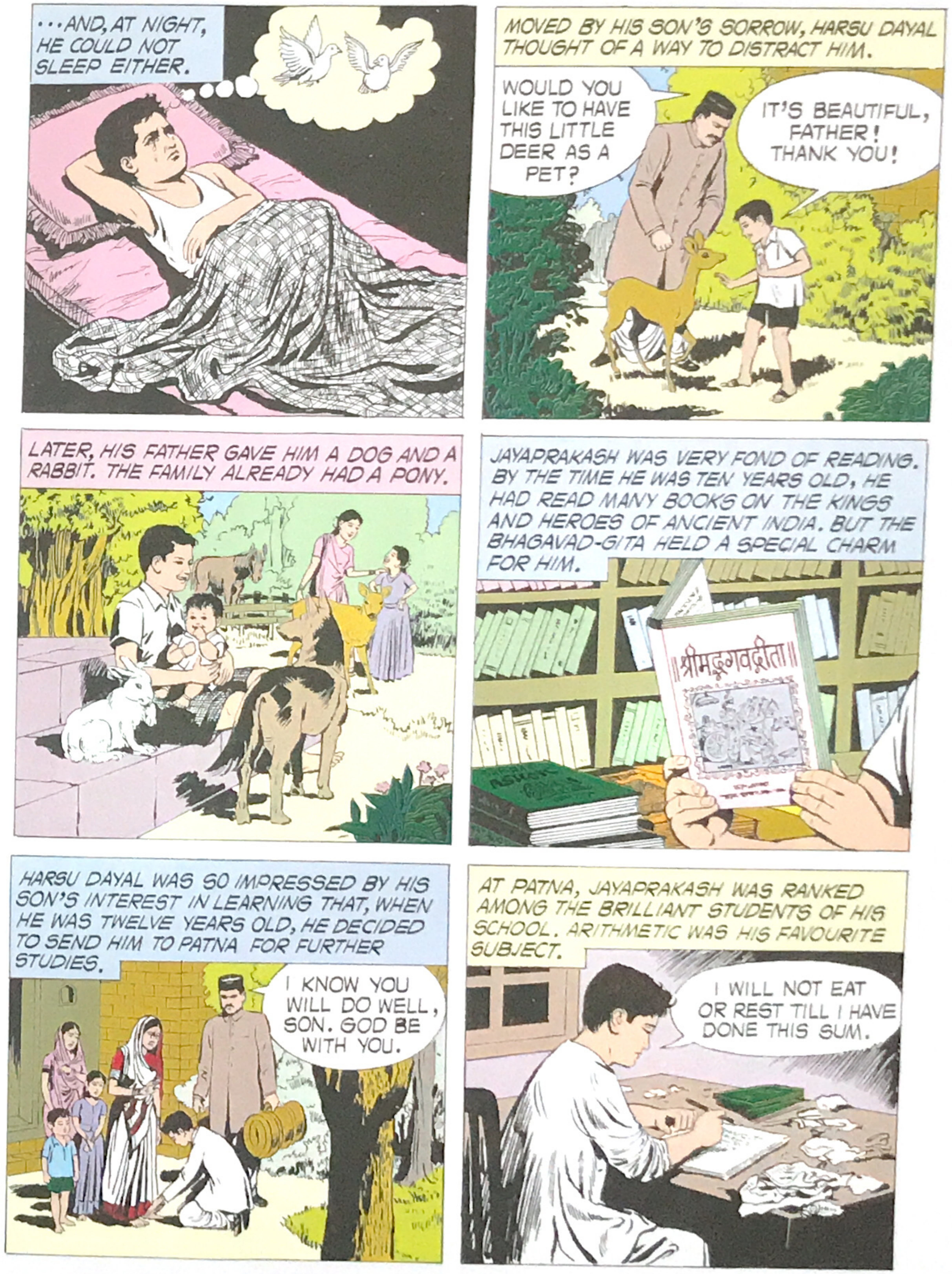
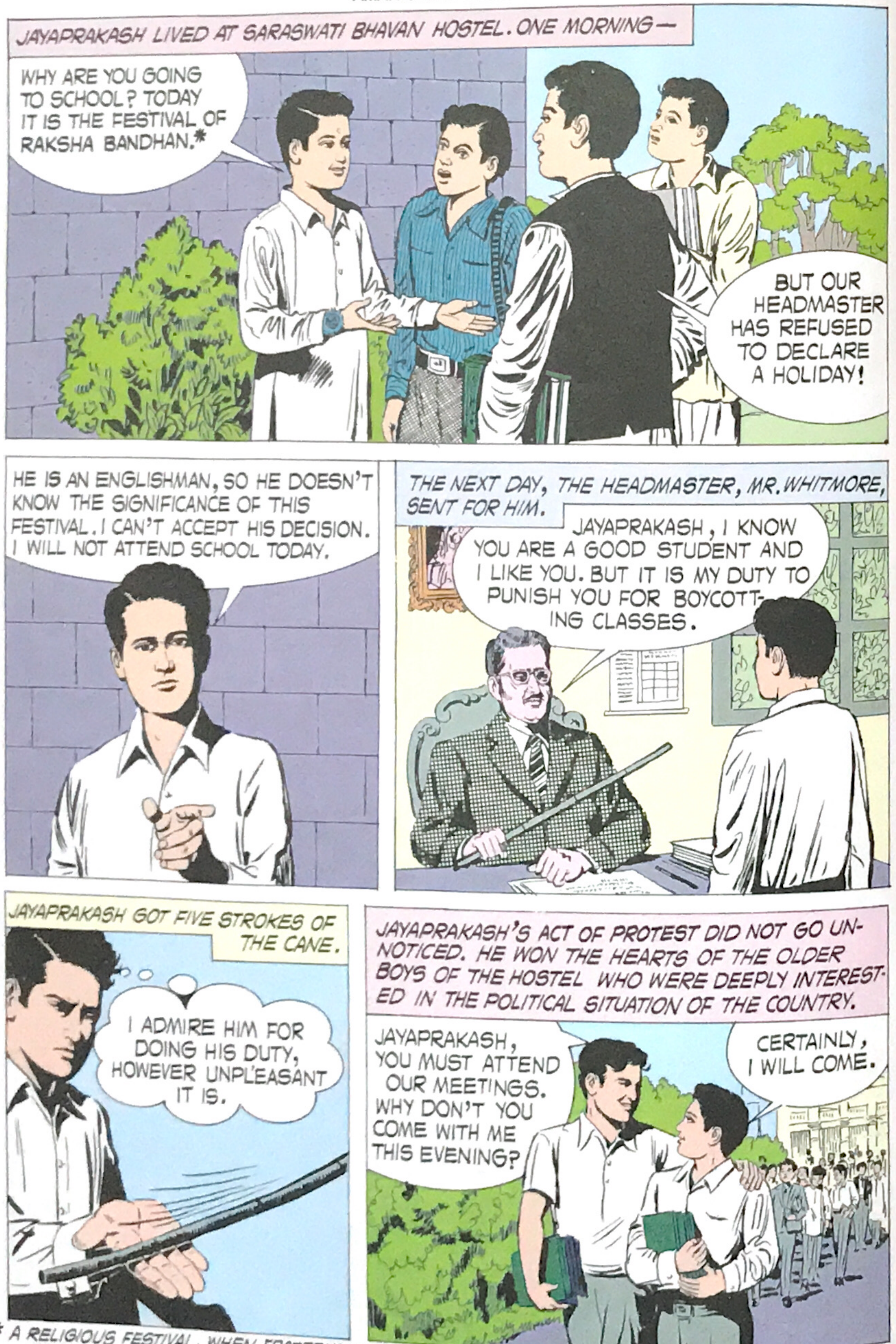


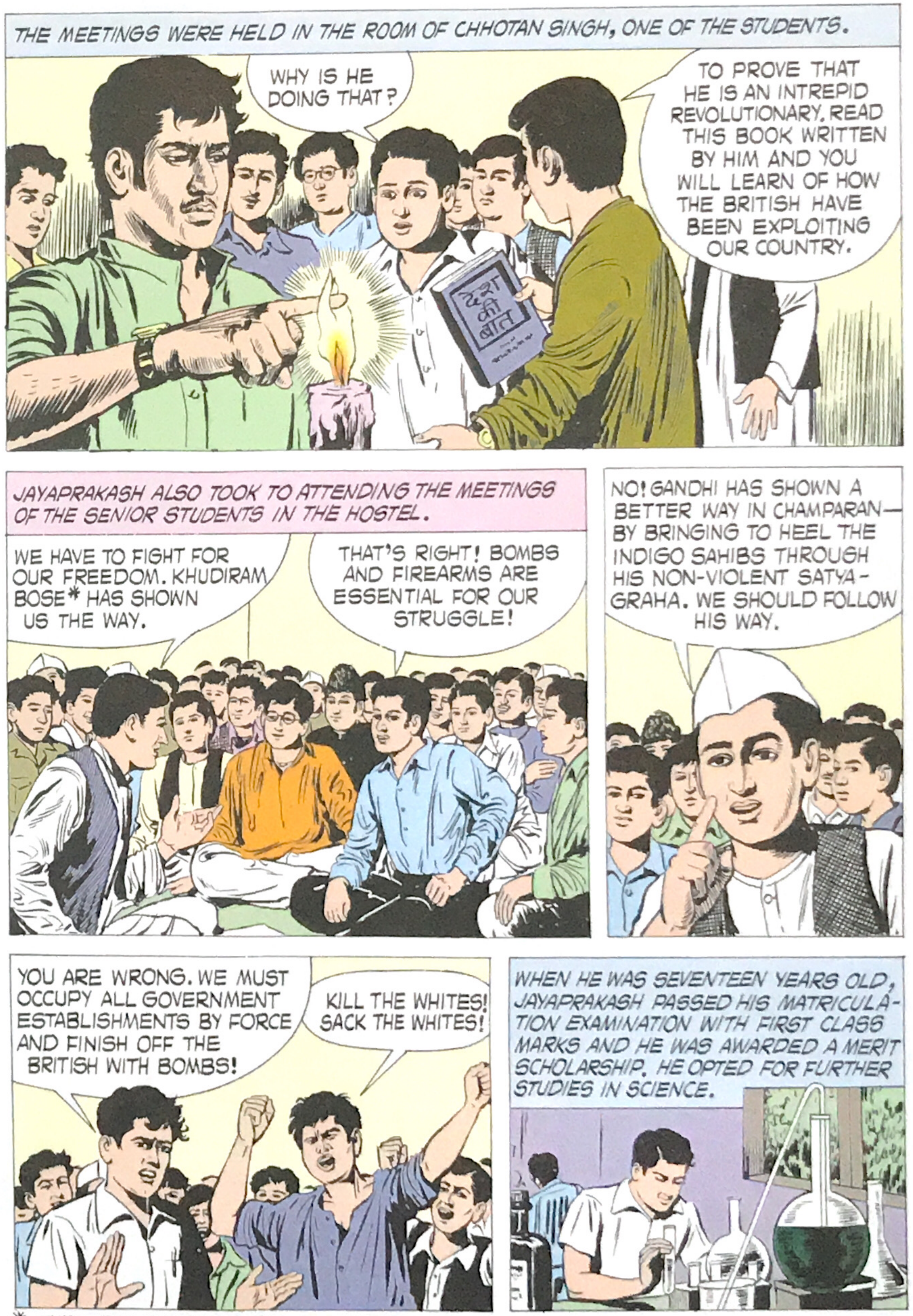
* A VILLAGE ON THE CONFLUENCE OF THE GANGA AND THE SARAYU ON THE U.P-BIHAR BORDER
⊕ A SIMPLETON


WHY DO YOU CALL HIM 'BAUL'? I HAVE YET TO MEET A CLEVERER CHILD!
I AM VERY HAPPY TO HEAR YOU SAY THAT, SIR.
THAT EVENING —
COME HERE, SON, I HAVE A SURPRISE FOR YOU.
DOVES! HOW LOVELY!
TAKE CARE OF THEM. YOU WILL GROW TO LIKE THEM.
THE CHILD WHO HAD NO INTEREST IN TOYS WAS DELIGHTED WITH THE DOVES.
BUT SOME TIME LATER, ONE OF THE DOVES DIED.
IN HIS SORROW, JAYAPRAKASH COULD NOT EAT THE WHOLE DAY...
MOTHER, I AM JUST NOT HUNGRY.

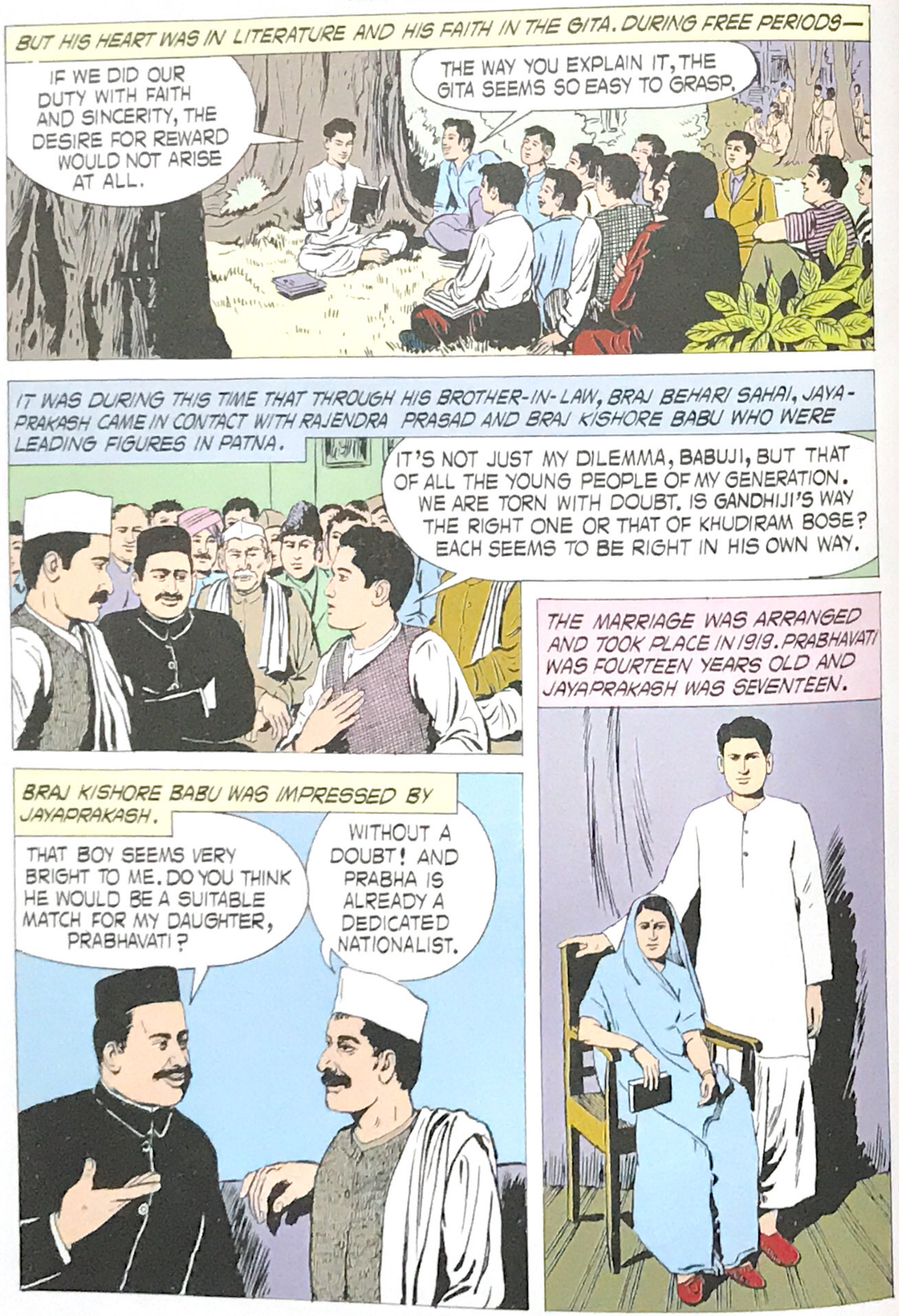

...AND, AT NIGHT, HE COULD NOT SLEEP EITHER.
MOVED BY HIS SON'S SORROW, HARSU DAYAL THOUGHT OF A WAY TO DISTRACT HIM.
WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE THIS LITTLE DEER AS A PET?
IT'S BEAUTIFUL, FATHER! THANK YOU!
LATER, HIS FATHER GAVE HIM A DOG AND A RABBIT. THE FAMILY ALREADY HAD A PONY.
JAYAPRAKASH WAS VERY FOND OF READING. BY THE TIME HE WAS TEN YEARS OLD, HE HAD READ MANY BOOKS ON THE KINGS AND HEROES OF ANCIENT INDIA. BUT THE BHAGAVAD-GITA HELD A SPECIAL CHARM FOR HIM.
श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता
HARSU DAYAL WAS SO IMPRESSED BY HIS SON'S INTEREST IN LEARNING THAT, WHEN HE WAS TWELVE YEARS OLD, HE DECIDED TO SEND HIM TO PATNA FOR FURTHER STUDIES.
I KNOW YOU WILL DO WELL, SON. GOD BE WITH YOU.
AT PATNA, JAYAPRAKASH WAS RANKED AMONG THE BRILLIANT STUDENTS OF HIS SCHOOL. ARITHMETIC WAS HIS FAVOURITE SUBJECT.
I WILL NOT EAT OR REST TILL I HAVE DONE THIS SUM.

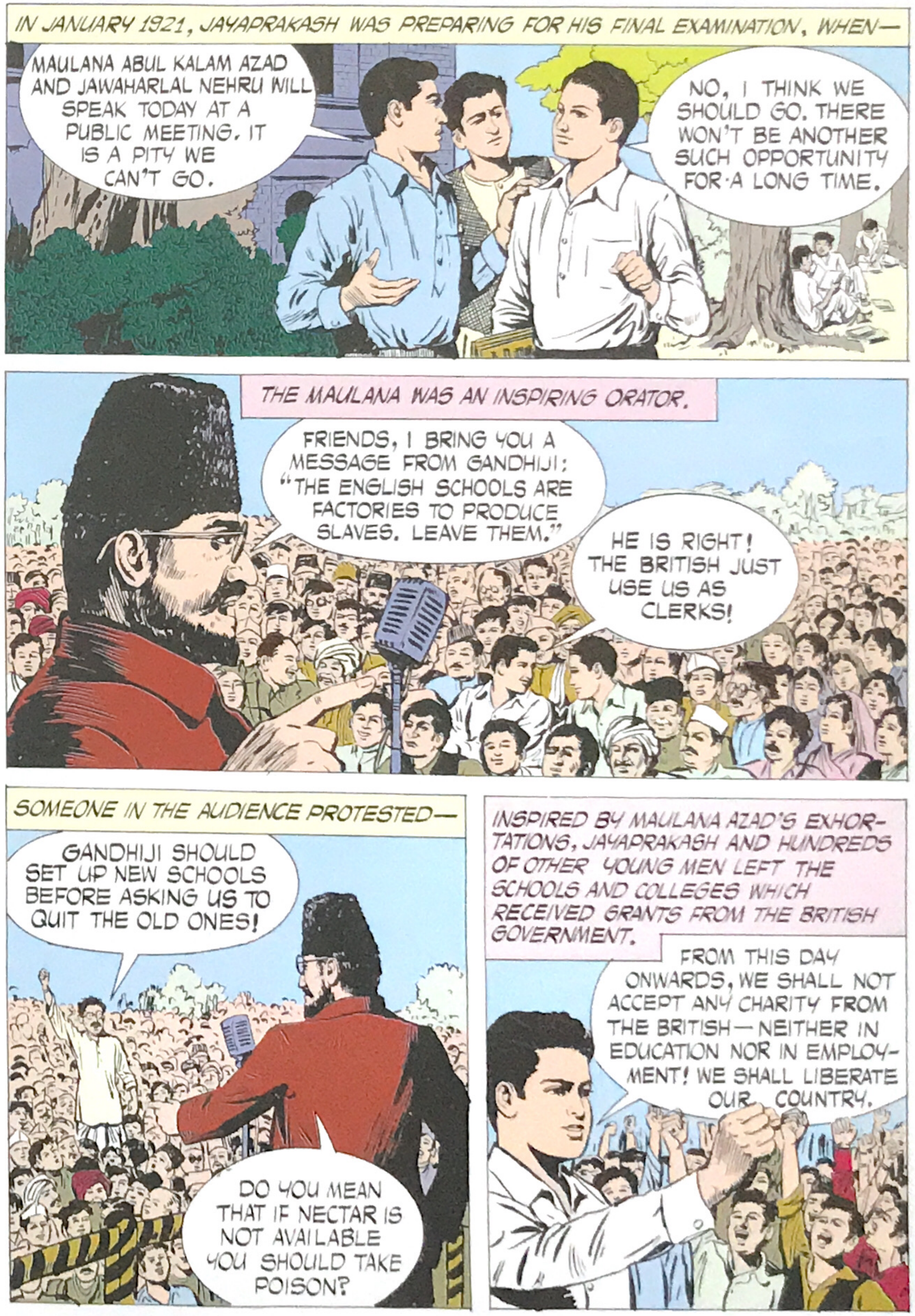


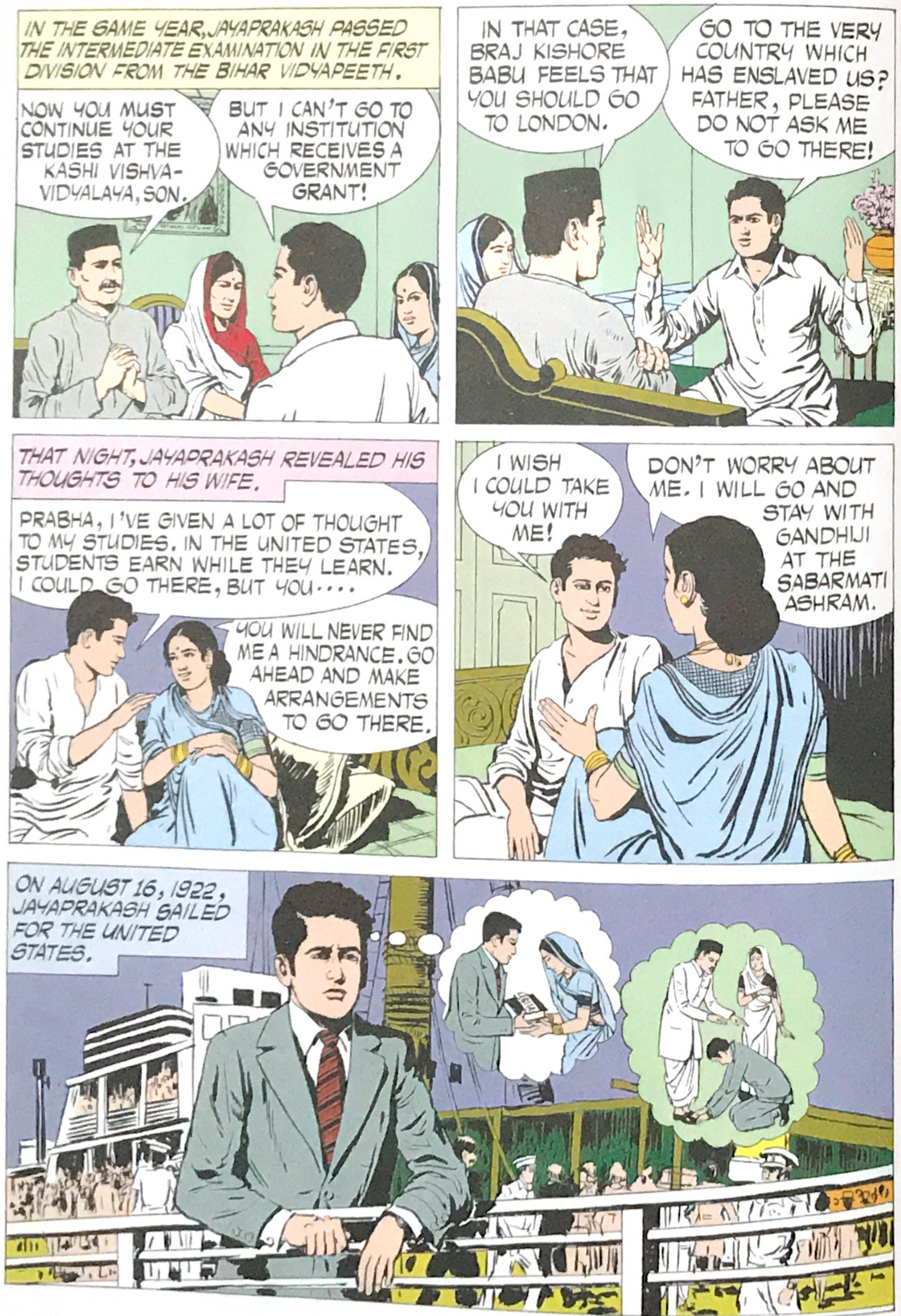
* A RELIGIOUS FESTIVAL, WHEN FRATERNAL TIES ARE STRENGTHENED BY THE TYING OF THE SYMBOLIC THREAD

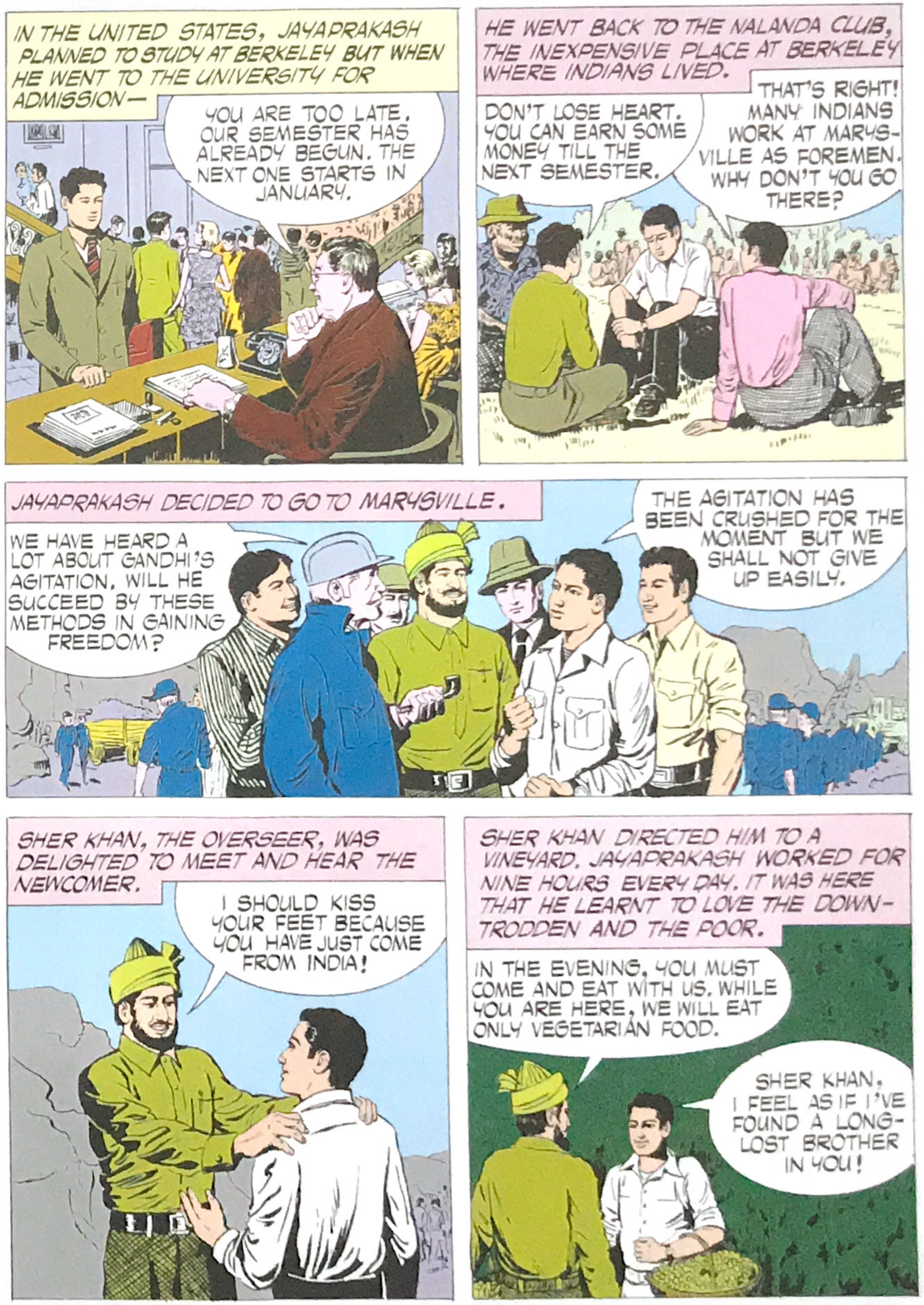


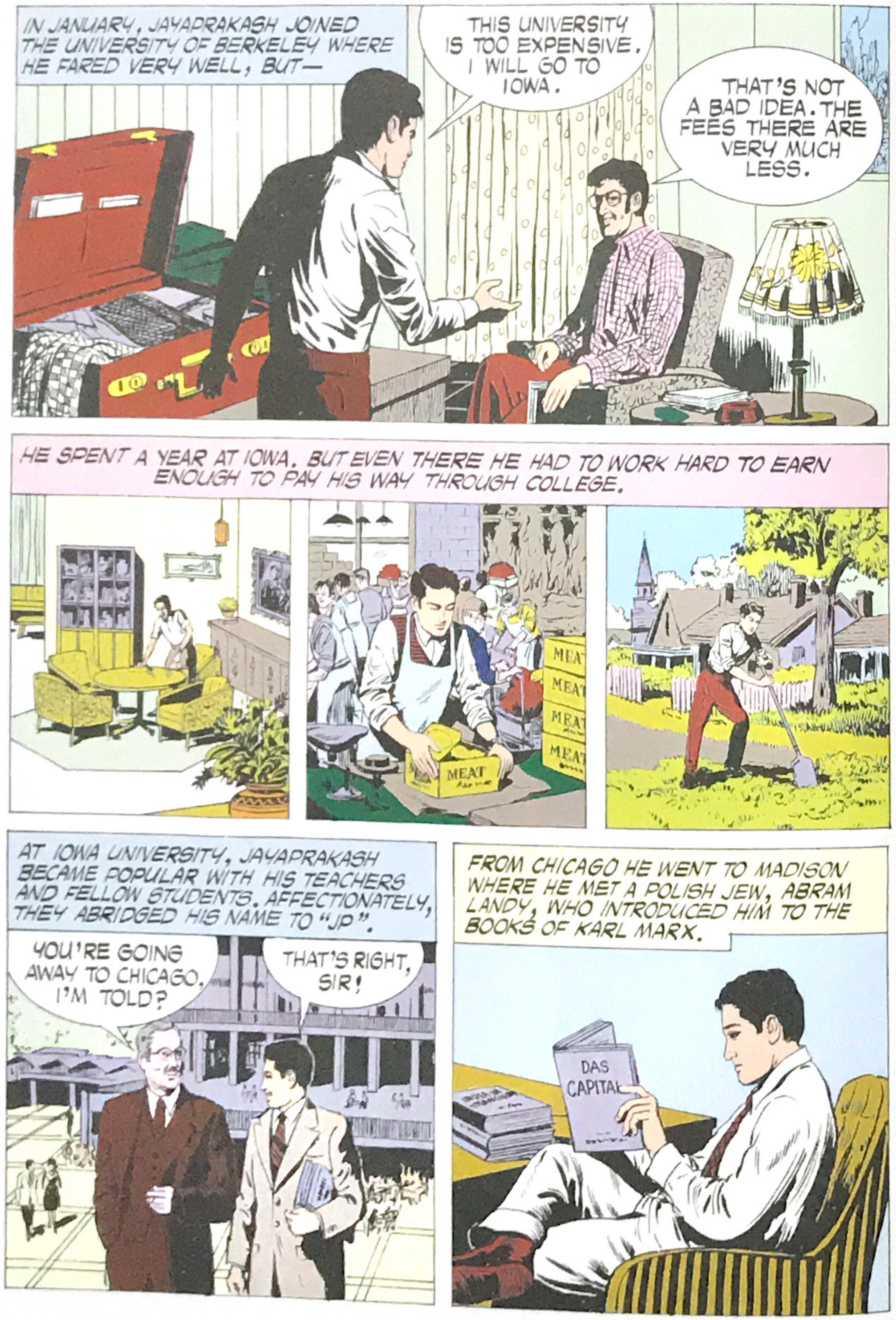
* THE FIRST REVOLUTIONARY TO THROW A BOMB AT AN ENGLISHMAN


BUT HIS HEART WAS IN LITERATURE AND HIS FAITH IN THE GITA. DURING FREE PERIODS—
IF WE DID OUR DUTY WITH FAITH AND SINCERITY, THE DESIRE FOR REWARD WOULD NOT ARISE AT ALL.
THE WAY YOU EXPLAIN IT, THE GITA SEEMS SO EASY TO GRASP.
IT WAS DURING THIS TIME THAT THROUGH HIS BROTHER-IN-LAW, BRAJ BEHARI SAHAI, JAYAPRAKASH CAME IN CONTACT WITH RAJENDRA PRASAD AND BRAJ KISHORE BABU WHO WERE LEADING FIGURES IN PATNA.
IT'S NOT JUST MY DILEMMA, BABUJI, BUT THAT OF ALL THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF MY GENERATION. WE ARE TORN WITH DOUBT. IS GANDHIJI'S WAY THE RIGHT ONE OR THAT OF KHUDIRAM BOSE? EACH SEEMS TO BE RIGHT IN HIS OWN WAY.
BRAJ KISHORE BABU WAS IMPRESSED BY JAYAPRAKASH.
THAT BOY SEEMS VERY BRIGHT TO ME. DO YOU THINK HE WOULD BE A SUITABLE MATCH FOR MY DAUGHTER, PRABHAVATI?
WITHOUT A DOUBT! AND PRABHA IS ALREADY A DEDICATED NATIONALIST.
THE MARRIAGE WAS ARRANGED AND TOOK PLACE IN 1919. PRABHAVATI WAS FOURTEEN YEARS OLD AND JAYAPRAKASH WAS SEVENTEEN.

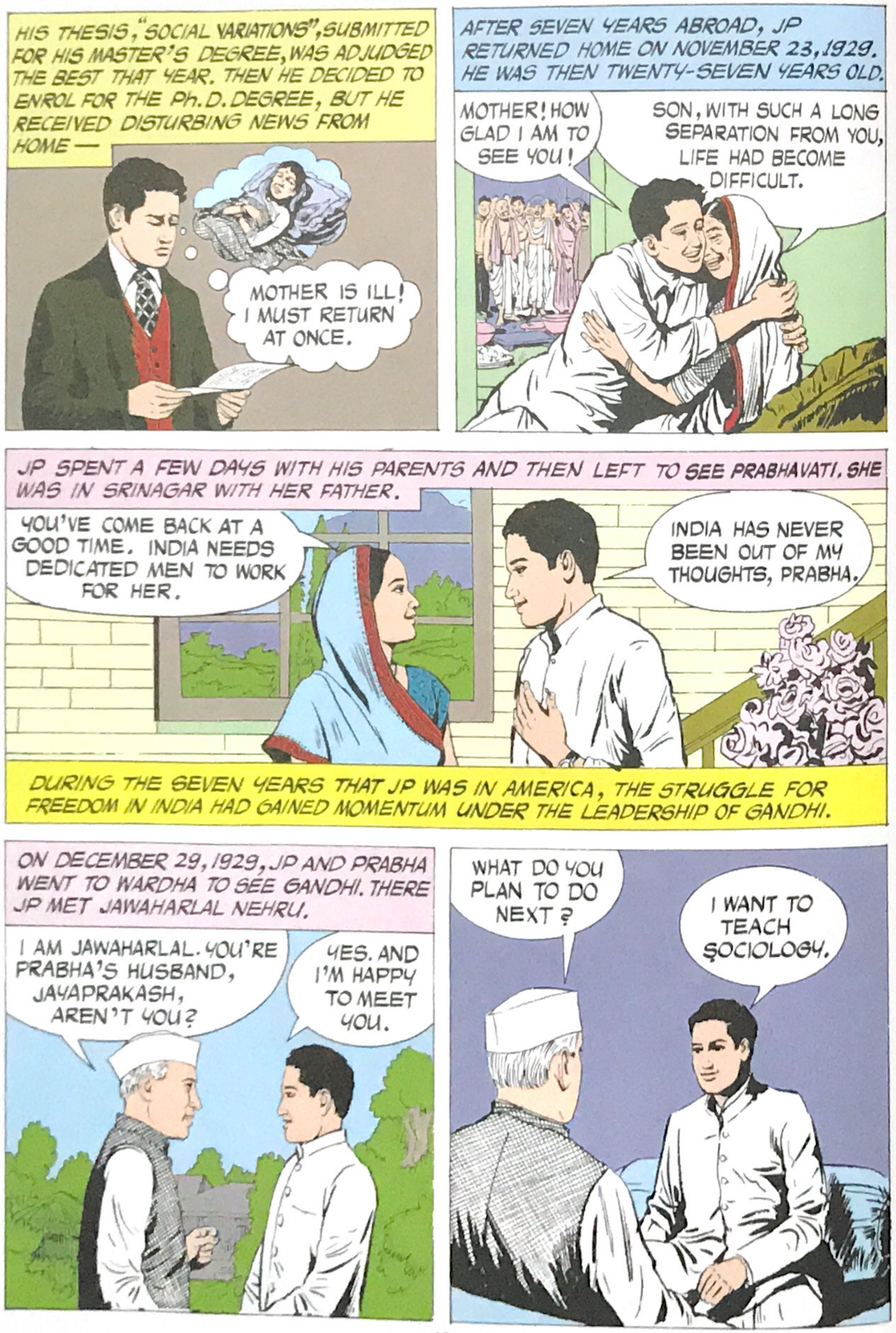

IN JANUARY 1921, JAYAPRAKASH WAS PREPARING FOR HIS FINAL EXAMINATION, WHEN—
MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD AND JAWAHARLAL NEHRU WILL SPEAK TODAY AT A PUBLIC MEETING. IT IS A PITY WE CAN'T GO.
NO, I THINK WE SHOULD GO. THERE WON'T BE ANOTHER SUCH OPPORTUNITY FOR A LONG TIME.
THE MAULANA WAS AN INSPIRING ORATOR.
FRIENDS, I BRING YOU A MESSAGE FROM GANDHIJI: "THE ENGLISH SCHOOLS ARE FACTORIES TO PRODUCE SLAVES. LEAVE THEM."
HE IS RIGHT! THE BRITISH JUST USE US AS CLERKS!
SOMEONE IN THE AUDIENCE PROTESTED—
GANDHIJI SHOULD SET UP NEW SCHOOLS BEFORE ASKING US TO QUIT THE OLD ONES!
DO YOU MEAN THAT IF NECTAR IS NOT AVAILABLE YOU SHOULD TAKE POISON?
INSPIRED BY MAULANA AZAD'S EXHORTATIONS, JAYAPRAKASH AND HUNDREDS OF OTHER YOUNG MEN LEFT THE SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES WHICH RECEIVED GRANTS FROM THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT.
FROM THIS DAY ONWARDS, WE SHALL NOT ACCEPT ANY CHARITY FROM THE BRITISH — NEITHER IN EDUCATION NOR IN EMPLOYMENT! WE SHALL LIBERATE OUR COUNTRY.


IN THE SAME YEAR, JAYAPRAKASH PASSED THE INTERMEDIATE EXAMINATION IN THE FIRST DIVISION FROM THE BIHAR VIDYAPEETH.
NOW YOU MUST CONTINUE YOUR STUDIES AT THE KASHI VISHVA-VIDYALAYA, SON.
BUT I CAN'T GO TO ANY INSTITUTION WHICH RECEIVES A GOVERNMENT GRANT!
IN THAT CASE, BRAJ KISHORE BABU FEELS THAT YOU SHOULD GO TO LONDON.
GO TO THE VERY COUNTRY WHICH HAS ENSLAVED US? FATHER, PLEASE DO NOT ASK ME TO GO THERE!
THAT NIGHT, JAYAPRAKASH REVEALED HIS THOUGHTS TO HIS WIFE.
PRABHA, I'VE GIVEN A LOT OF THOUGHT TO MY STUDIES. IN THE UNITED STATES, STUDENTS EARN WHILE THEY LEARN. I COULD GO THERE, BUT YOU....
YOU WILL NEVER FIND ME A HINDRANCE. GO AHEAD AND MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO GO THERE.
I WISH I COULD TAKE YOU WITH ME!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME. I WILL GO AND STAY WITH GANDHIJI AT THE SABARMATI ASHRAM.
ON AUGUST 16, 1922, JAYAPRAKASH SAILED FOR THE UNITED STATES.


IN THE UNITED STATES, JAYAPRAKASH PLANNED TO STUDY AT BERKELEY BUT WHEN HE WENT TO THE UNIVERSITY FOR ADMISSION—
YOU ARE TOO LATE. OUR SEMESTER HAS ALREADY BEGUN. THE NEXT ONE STARTS IN JANUARY.
HE WENT BACK TO THE NALANDA CLUB, THE INEXPENSIVE PLACE AT BERKELEY WHERE INDIANS LIVED.
DON'T LOSE HEART. YOU CAN EARN SOME MONEY TILL THE NEXT SEMESTER.
THAT'S RIGHT! MANY INDIANS WORK AT MARYSVILLE AS FOREMEN. WHY DON'T YOU GO THERE?
JAYAPRAKASH DECIDED TO GO TO MARYSVILLE.
WE HAVE HEARD A LOT ABOUT GANDHI'S AGITATION. WILL HE SUCCEED BY THESE METHODS IN GAINING FREEDOM?
THE AGITATION HAS BEEN CRUSHED FOR THE MOMENT BUT WE SHALL NOT GIVE UP EASILY.
SHER KHAN, THE OVERSEER, WAS DELIGHTED TO MEET AND HEAR THE NEWCOMER.
I SHOULD KISS YOUR FEET BECAUSE YOU HAVE JUST COME FROM INDIA!
SHER KHAN DIRECTED HIM TO A VINEYARD. JAYAPRAKASH WORKED FOR NINE HOURS EVERY DAY. IT WAS HERE THAT HE LEARNT TO LOVE THE DOWN-TRODDEN AND THE POOR.
IN THE EVENING, YOU MUST COME AND EAT WITH US. WHILE YOU ARE HERE, WE WILL EAT ONLY VEGETARIAN FOOD.
SHER KHAN, I FEEL AS IF I'VE FOUND A LONG-LOST BROTHER IN YOU!

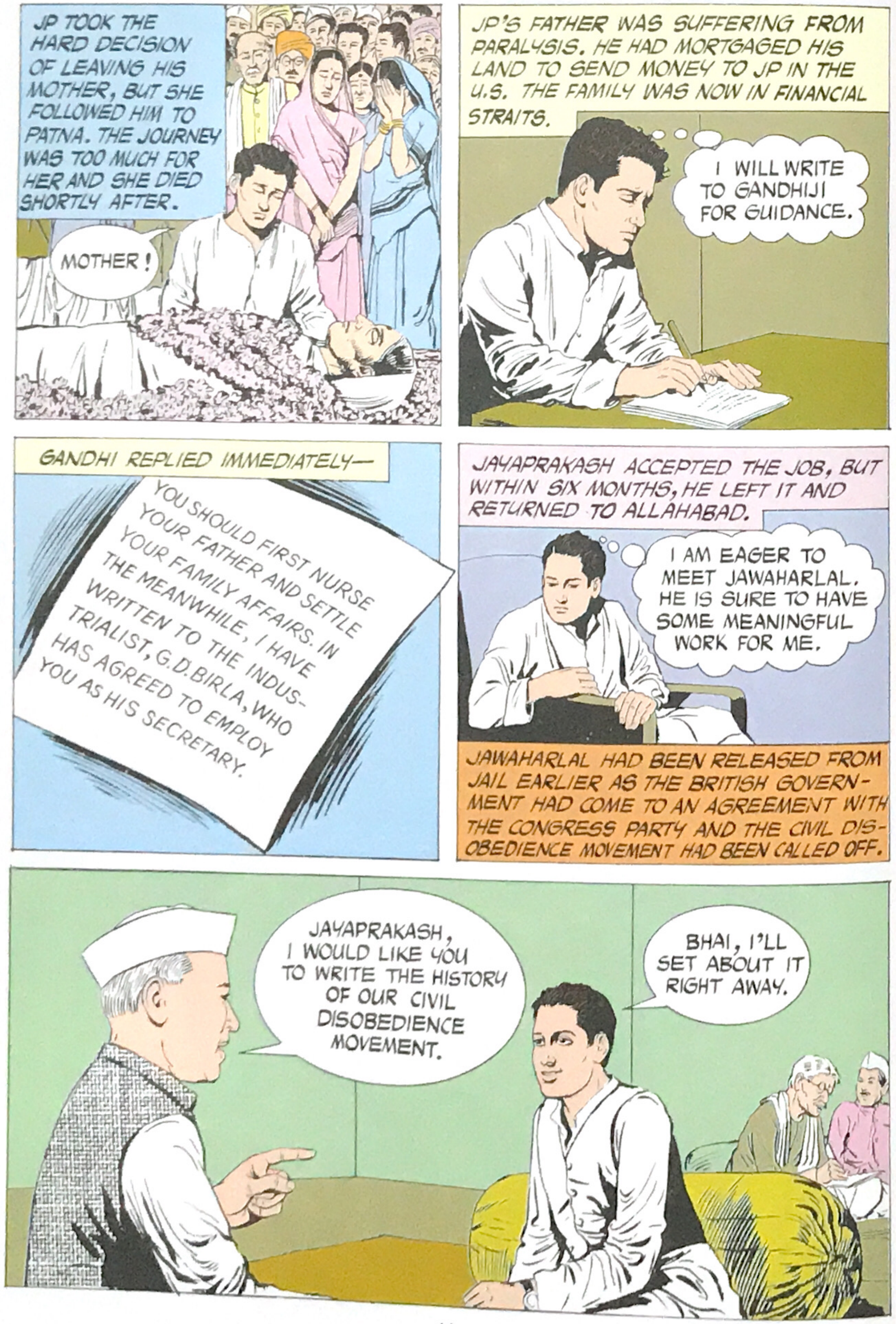

IN JANUARY, JAYAPRAKASH JOINED THE UNIVERSITY OF BERKELEY WHERE HE FARED VERY WELL, BUT—
THIS UNIVERSITY IS TOO EXPENSIVE. I WILL GO TO IOWA.
THAT'S NOT A BAD IDEA. THE FEES THERE ARE VERY MUCH LESS.
HE SPENT A YEAR AT IOWA. BUT EVEN THERE HE HAD TO WORK HARD TO EARN ENOUGH TO PAY HIS WAY THROUGH COLLEGE.
MEAT
AT IOWA UNIVERSITY, JAYAPRAKASH BECAME POPULAR WITH HIS TEACHERS AND FELLOW STUDENTS. AFFECTIONATELY, THEY ABRIDGED HIS NAME TO "JP".
YOU'RE GOING AWAY TO CHICAGO, I'M TOLD?
THAT'S RIGHT, SIR!
FROM CHICAGO HE WENT TO MADISON WHERE HE MET A POLISH JEW, ABRAM LANDY, WHO INTRODUCED HIM TO THE BOOKS OF KARL MARX.
DAS CAPITAL

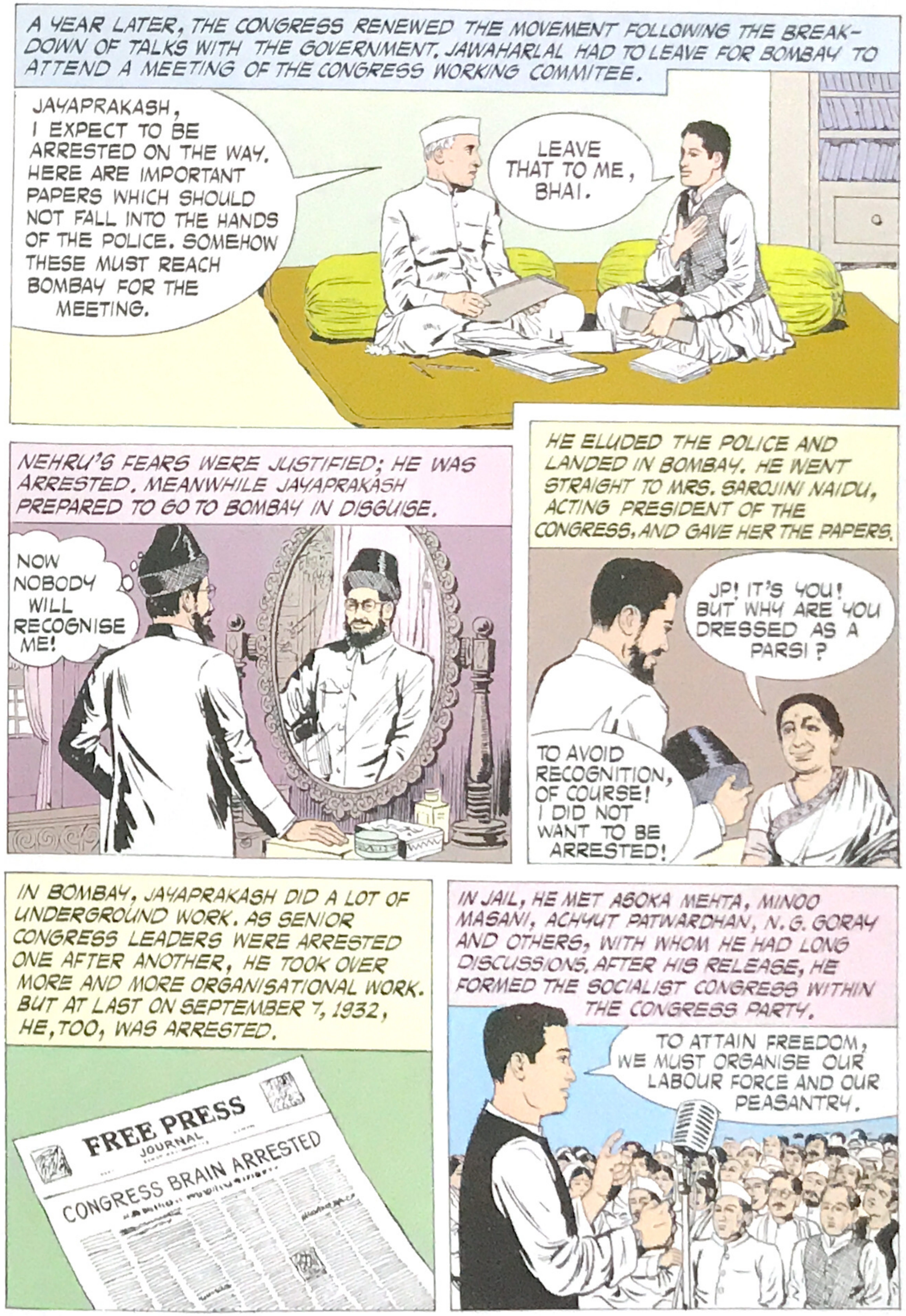
INFLUENCED BY COMMUNIST THOUGHT, JP DECIDED TO VISIT THE SOVIET UNION.
I SHOUD GO BACK TO CHICAGO TO EARN ENOUGH MONEY TO VISIT MOSCOW.
IN THE WINTER OF 1926, HE RETURNED TO CHICAGO. IN THE MORNINGS HE WOULD TAKE JUST ONE CUP OF COFFEE AND GO OUT TO LOOK FOR A JOB. BUT—
NO VACANCY FOR ASIANS
WHEREVER HE WENT, HE WAS CONFRONTED WITH SUCH NOTICES.
TO ADD TO HIS MISERY, JP DID NOT HAVE ENOUGH WARM CLOTHES.
FOR TWO DAYS I HAVE NOT EATEN. AND NOW I DON'T HAVE THE TRAM FARE EITHER!
HE TRUDGED FOR LONG MILES ON SNOW-COVERED ROADS LOOKING FOR SOME JOB, ANY JOB—
INEVITABLY, JP FELL ILL AND HE WAS BED-RIDDEN FOR SIX MONTHS. HE INCURRED A LOT OF DEBTS AND FELL BEHIND IN HIS STUDIES.
I DID NOT WANT TO WRITE HOME FOR MONEY, BUT LUCK HAS LET ME DOWN!
HIS FATHER MORTGAGED HIS LANDS TO SEND HIM THE MONEY.
JAYAPRAKASH GAVE UP HIS PLANS TO GO TO THE SOVIET UNION. INSTEAD HE MOVED ON TO OHIO, WHERE HE OBTAINED HIS B.A. DEGREE IN SOCIOLOGY AND ECONOMICS. HE THEN BEGAN STUDYING FOR HIS M.A., WHILE ALSO TEACHING AS ASSISTANT PROFESSOR AT THE UNIVERSITY.

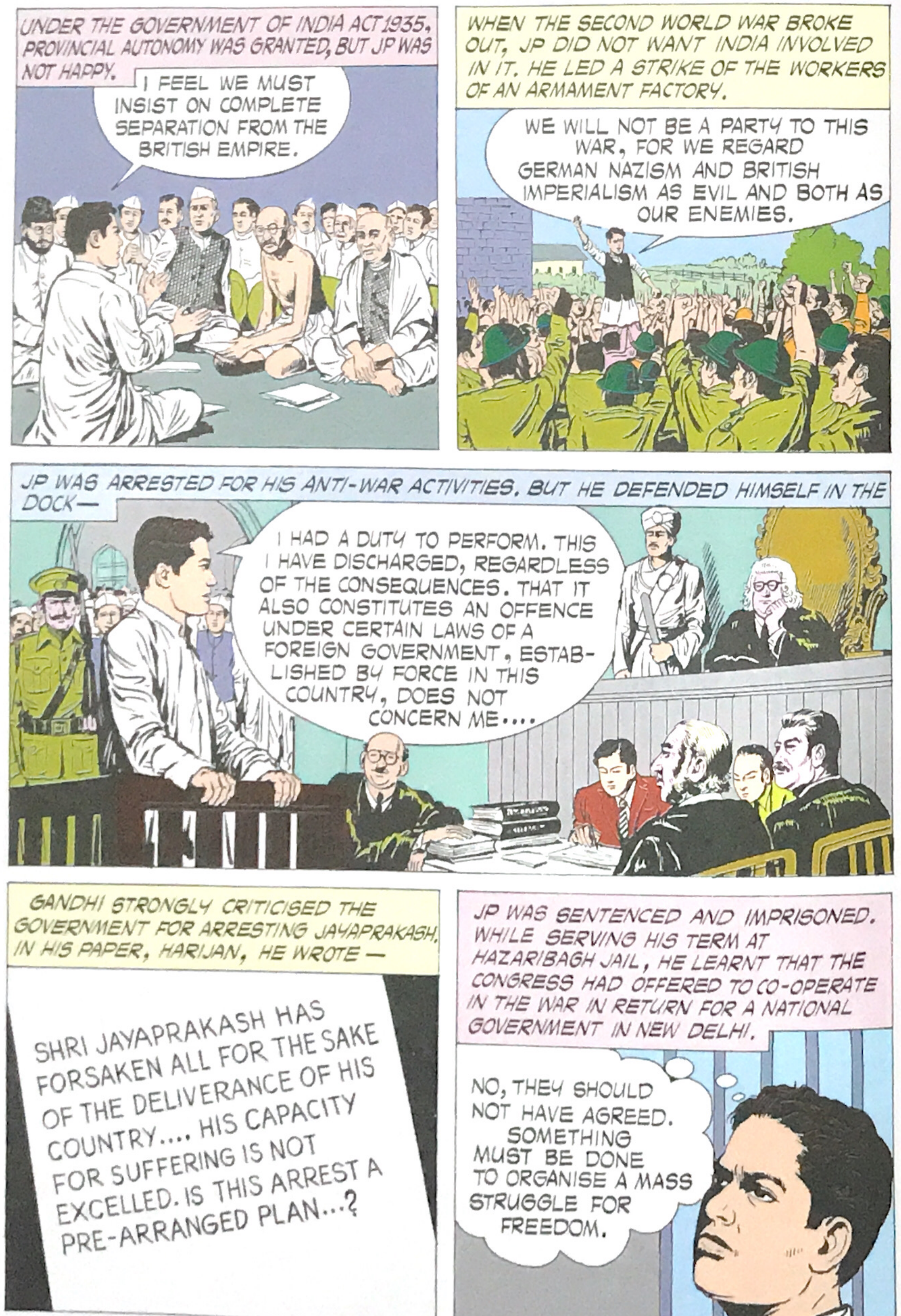

HIS THESIS, "SOCIAL VARIATIONS", SUBMITTED FOR HIS MASTER'S DEGREE, WAS ADJUDGED THE BEST THAT YEAR. THEN HE DECIDED TO ENROL FOR THE Ph.D. DEGREE, BUT HE RECEIVED DISTURBING NEWS FROM HOME —
MOTHER IS ILL! I MUST RETURN AT ONCE.
AFTER SEVEN YEARS ABROAD, JP RETURNED HOME ON NOVEMBER 23, 1929. HE WAS THEN TWENTY-SEVEN YEARS OLD.
MOTHER! HOW GLAD I AM TO SEE YOU!
SON, WITH SUCH A LONG SEPARATION FROM YOU, LIFE HAD BECOME DIFFICULT.
JP SPENT A FEW DAYS WITH HIS PARENTS AND THEN LEFT TO SEE PRABHAVATI. SHE WAS IN SRINAGAR WITH HER FATHER.
YOU'VE COME BACK AT A GOOD TIME. INDIA NEEDS DEDICATED MEN TO WORK FOR HER.
INDIA HAS NEVER BEEN OUT OF MY THOUGHTS, PRABHA.
DURING THE SEVEN YEARS THAT JP WAS IN AMERICA, THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM IN INDIA HAD GAINED MOMENTUM UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF GANDHI.
ON DECEMBER 29, 1929, JP AND PRABHA WENT TO WARDHA TO SEE GANDHI. THERE JP MET JAWAHARLAL NEHRU.
I AM JAWAHARLAL. YOU'RE PRABHA'S HUSBAND, JAYAPRAKASH, AREN'T YOU?
YES. AND I'M HAPPY TO MEET YOU.
WHAT DO YOU PLAN TO DO NEXT?
I WANT TO TEACH SOCIOLOGY.

WHY DON'T YOU COME TO ALLAHABAD INSTEAD AND TAKE CHARGE OF THE LABOUR RESEARCH BUREAU OF THE CONGRESS?
JAYAPRAKASH ACCEPTED THE OFFER AND, EARLY IN 1930, HE REACHED ALLAHABAD. PRABHAVATI JOINED HIM THERE.
THE POST OF GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE CONGRESS HAS FALLEN VACANT. WILL YOU TAKE THE JOB?
I WILL, BHAI.*
PRABHAVATI AND KAMALA NEHRU BECAME GOOD FRIENDS, TOO. JP WAS HAPPY AT HOME AS WELL AS AT WORK, WHEN—
PRABHA, MOTHER IS ILL AND MAY NOT SURVIVE.
WE MUST GO TO HER AT ONCE!
IN APRIL 1930, GANDHI LAUNCHED THE CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT. THE WHOLE COUNTRY WAS IN A TURMOIL.
GANDHI AND NEHRU ARRESTED
AT THIS CRUCIAL MOMENT, JAYAPRAKASH HAD TO STAY IN HIS VILLAGE BECAUSE OF HIS AILING MOTHER.
DON'T GO BACK TO ALLAHABAD, SON. YOU WILL BE ARRESTED TOO. I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT YOU.
I AM TORN BETWEEN LOVE FOR MY MOTHER AND DUTY TO MY COUNTRY!

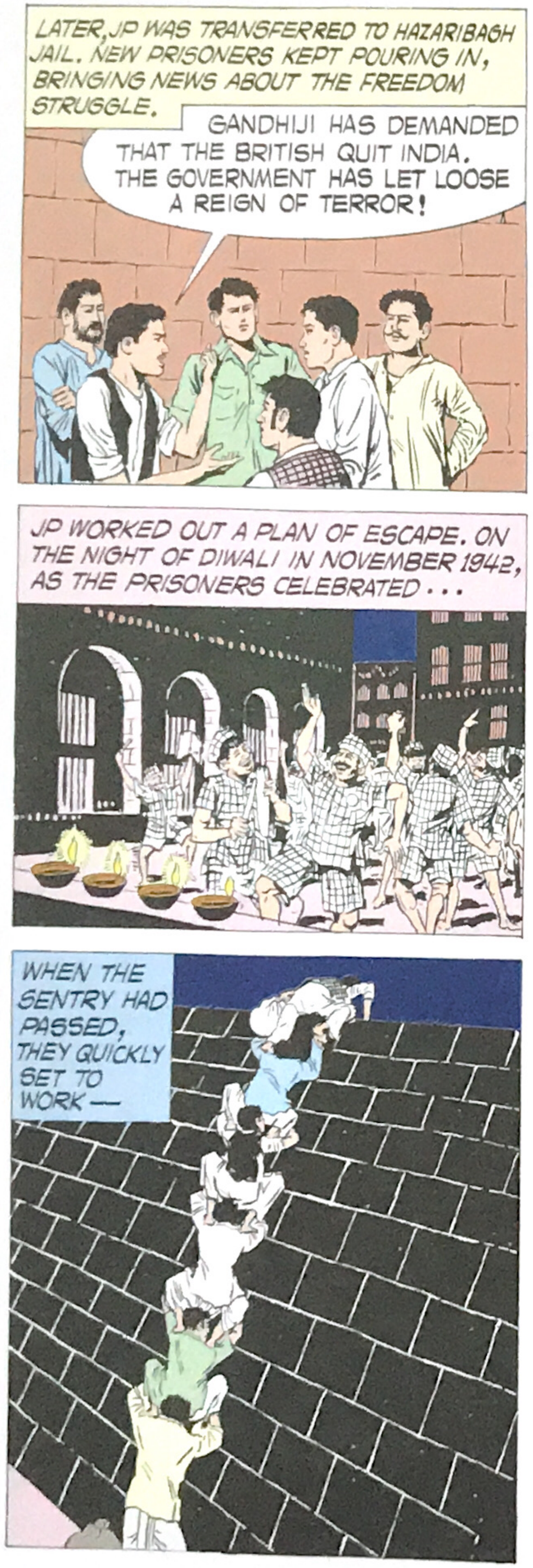
* BROTHER


JP TOOK THE HARD DECISION OF LEAVING HIS MOTHER, BUT SHE FOLLOWED HIM TO PATNA. THE JOURNEY WAS TOO MUCH FOR HER AND SHE DIED SHORTLY AFTER.
MOTHER!
JP'S FATHER WAS SUFFERING FROM PARALYSIS. HE HAD MORTGAGED HIS LAND TO SEND MONEY TO JP IN THE U.S. THE FAMILY WAS NOW IN FINANCIAL STRAITS.
I WILL WRITE TO GANDHIJI FOR GUIDANCE.
GANDHI REPLIED IMMEDIATELY—
YOU SHOULD FIRST NURSE YOUR FATHER AND SETTLE YOUR FAMILY AFFAIRS. IN THE MEANWHILE, I HAVE WRITTEN TO THE INDUSTRIALIST, G.D. BIRLA, WHO HAS AGREED TO EMPLOY YOU AS HIS SECRETARY.
JAYAPRAKASH ACCEPTED THE JOB, BUT WITHIN SIX MONTHS, HE LEFT IT AND RETURNED TO ALLAHABAD.
I AM EAGER TO MEET JAWAHARLAL. HE IS SURE TO HAVE SOME MEANINGFUL WORK FOR ME.
JAWAHARLAL HAD BEEN RELEASED FROM JAIL EARLIER AS THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAD COME TO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE CONGRESS PARTY AND THE CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT HAD BEEN CALLED OFF.
JAYAPRAKASH, I WOULD LIKE YOU TO WRITE THE HISTORY OF OUR CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT.
BHAI, I'LL SET ABOUT IT RIGHT AWAY.


A YEAR LATER, THE CONGRESS RENEWED THE MOVEMENT FOLLOWING THE BREAK-DOWN OF TALKS WITH THE GOVERNMENT. JAWAHARLAL HAD TO LEAVE FOR BOMBAY TO ATTEND A MEETING OF THE CONGRESS WORKING COMMITEE.
JAYAPRAKASH, I EXPECT TO BE ARRESTED ON THE WAY. HERE ARE IMPORTANT PAPERS WHICH SHOULD NOT FALL INTO THE HANDS OF THE POLICE. SOMEHOW THESE MUST REACH BOMBAY FOR THE MEETING.
LEAVE THAT TO ME, BHAI.
NEHRU'S FEARS WERE JUSTIFIED; HE WAS ARRESTED. MEANWHILE JAYAPRAKASH PREPARED TO GO TO BOMBAY IN DISGUISE.
NOW NOBODY WILL RECOGNISE ME!
HE ELUDED THE POLICE AND LANDED IN BOMBAY. HE WENT STRAIGHT TO MRS. SAROJINI NAIDU, ACTING PRESIDENT OF THE CONGRESS, AND GAVE HER THE PAPERS.
JP! IT'S YOU! BUT WHY ARE YOU DRESSED AS A PARSI?
TO AVOID RECOGNITION, OF COURSE! I DID NOT WANT TO BE ARRESTED!
IN BOMBAY, JAYAPRAKASH DID A LOT OF UNDERGROUND WORK. AS SENIOR CONGRESS LEADERS WERE ARRESTED ONE AFTER ANOTHER, HE TOOK OVER MORE AND MORE ORGANISATIONAL WORK. BUT AT LAST ON SEPTEMBER 7, 1932, HE, TOO, WAS ARRESTED.
FREE PRESS JOURNAL
CONGRESS BRAIN ARRESTED
IN JAIL, HE MET ASOKA MEHTA, MINOO MASANI, ACHYUT PATWARDHAN, N. G. GORAY AND OTHERS, WITH WHOM HE HAD LONG DISCUSSIONS. AFTER HIS RELEASE, HE FORMED THE SOCIALIST CONGRESS WITHIN THE CONGRESS PARTY.
TO ATTAIN FREEDOM, WE MUST ORGANISE OUR LABOUR FORCE AND OUR PEASANTRY.

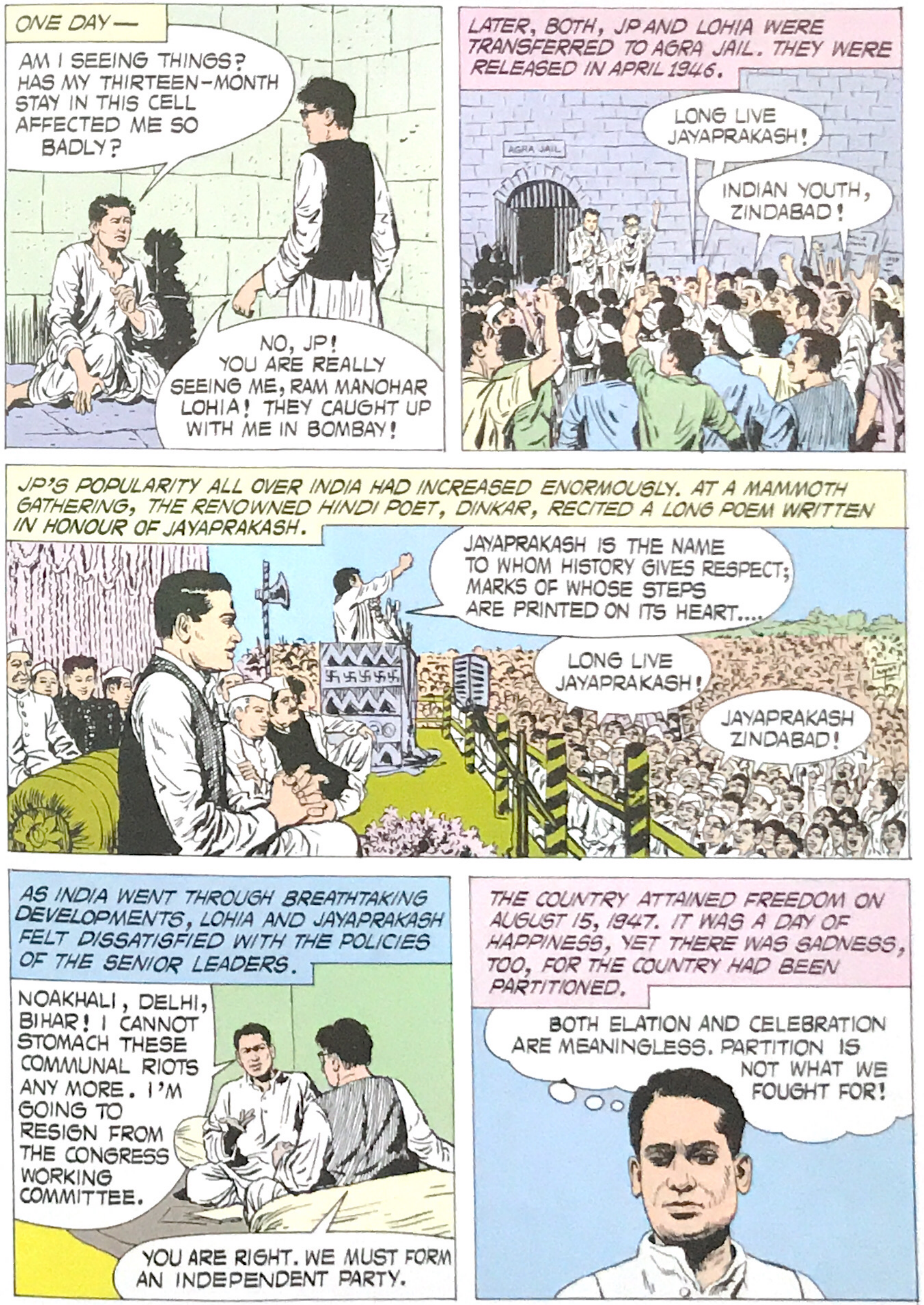


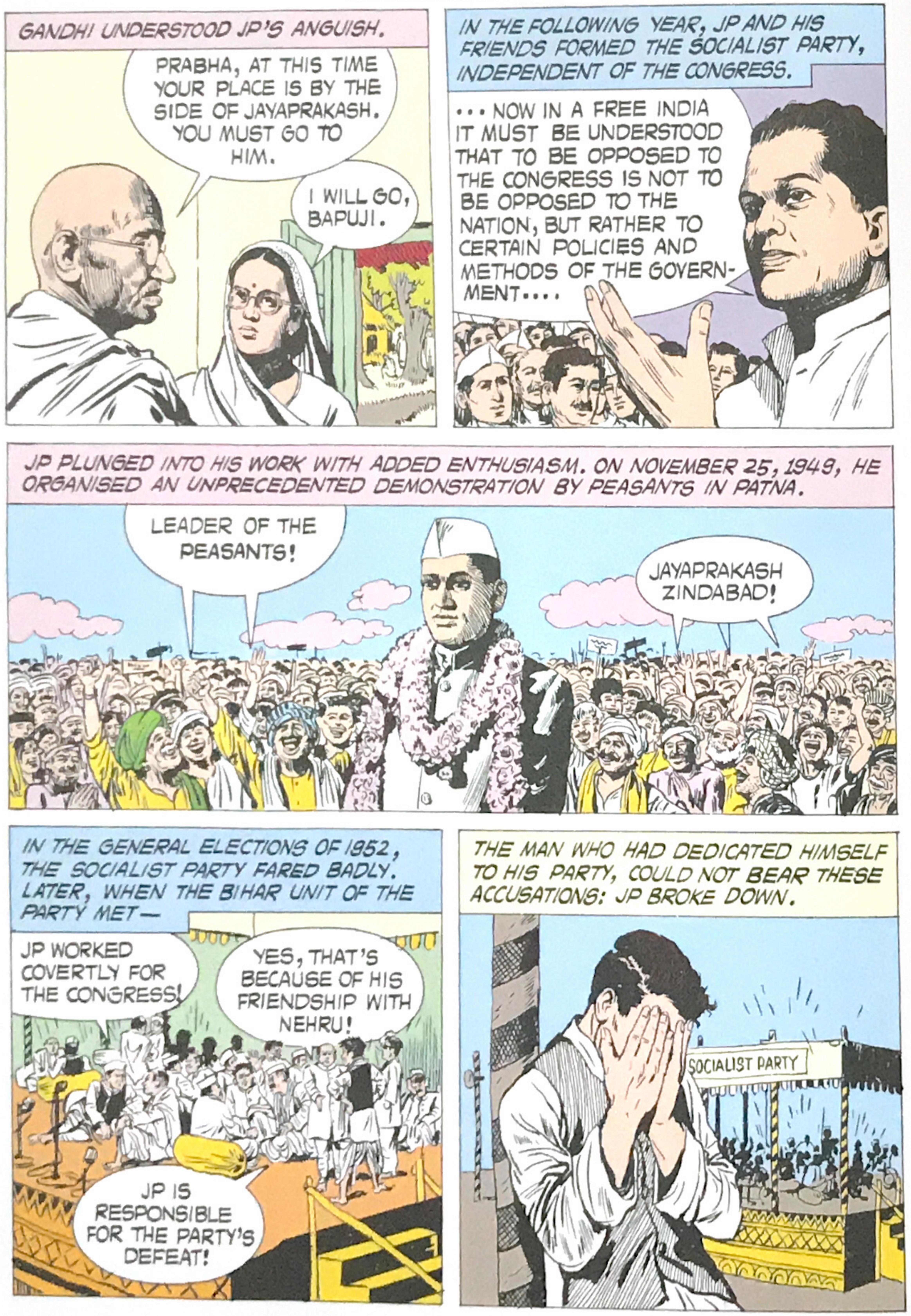
* NOW CALLED RAJASTHAN

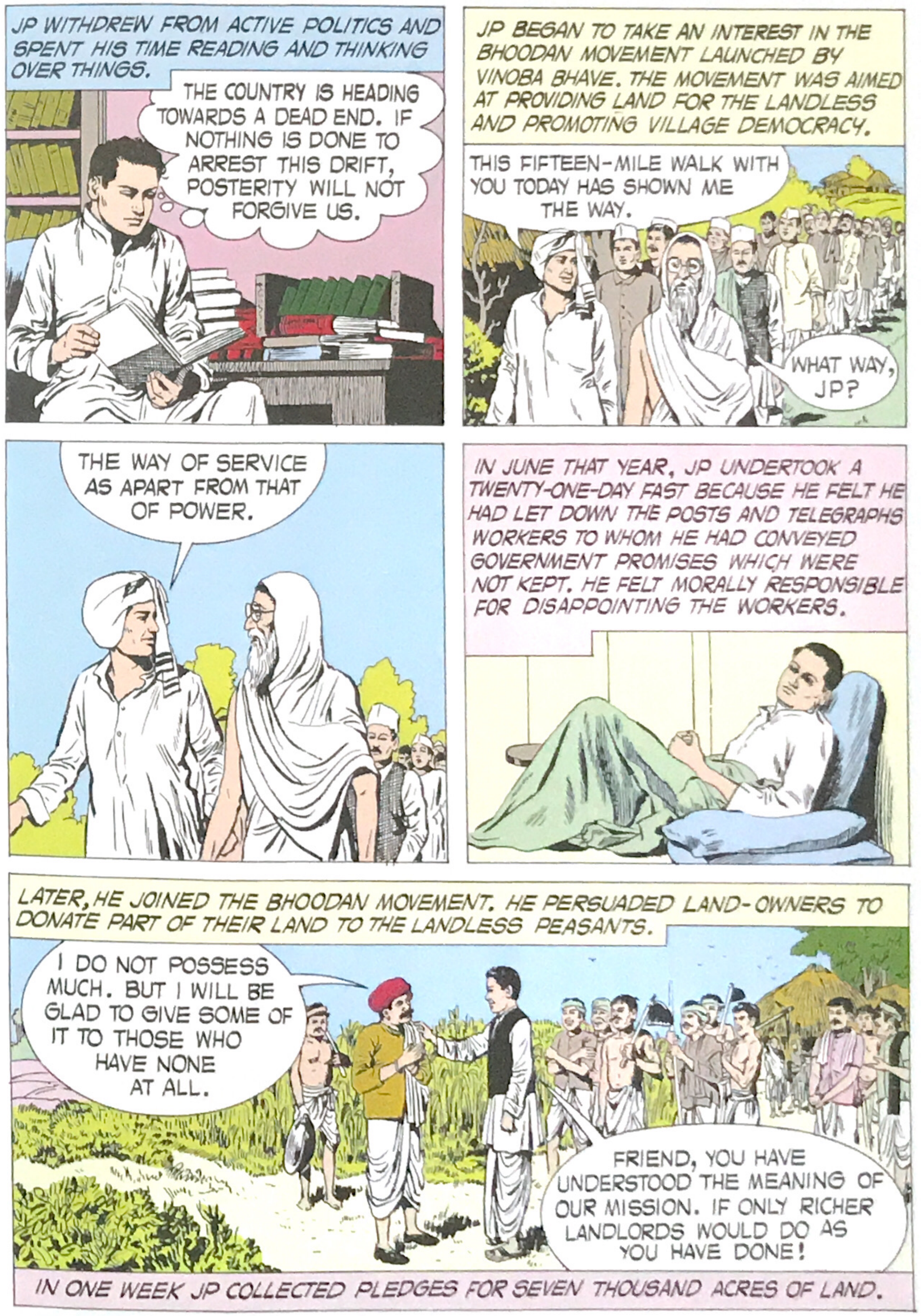

LATER, JP WAS TRANSFERRED TO HAZARIBAGH JAIL. NEW PRISONERS KEPT POURING IN, BRINGING NEWS ABOUT THE FREEDOM STRUGGLE.
GANDHIJI HAS DEMANDED THAT THE BRITISH QUIT INDIA. THE GOVERNMENT HAS LET LOOSE A REIGN OF TERROR!
JP EXPLODED.
WHY ARE WE HERE! WE SHOULD BE RIGHT AT THE CENTRE OF IT ALL! WE SHOULD BE TAKING PART IN THE REVOLT!
JP WORKED OUT A PLAN OF ESCAPE. ON THE NIGHT OF DIWALI IN NOVEMBER 1942, AS THE PRISONERS CELEBRATED . . .
. . . JP AND FIVE OTHERS WAITED FOR AN OPPORTUNE MOMENT IN A DARK CORNER.
THE SENTRY!
WHEN THE SENTRY HAD PASSED, THEY QUICKLY SET TO WORK —
HURRY!

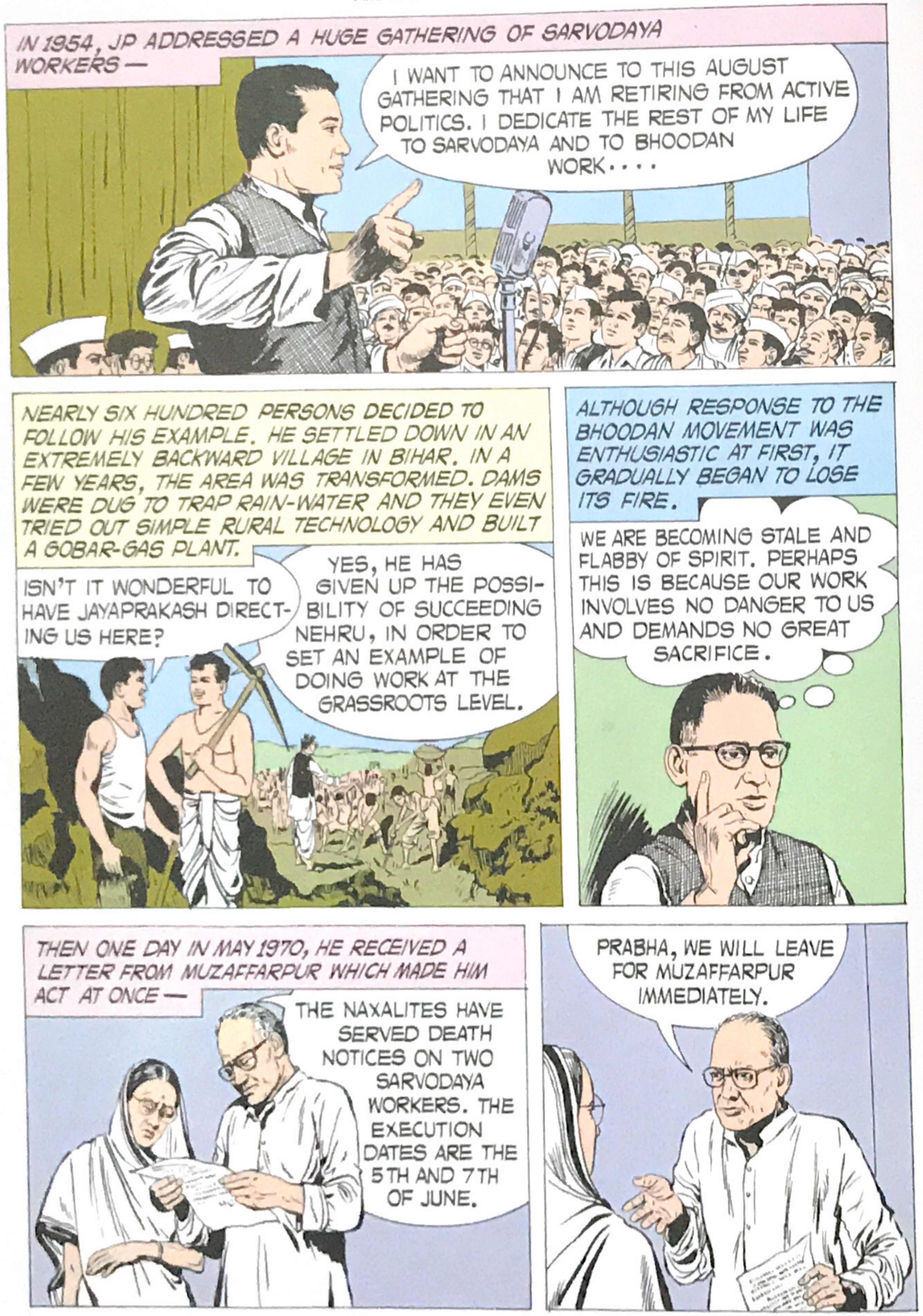
IN A FEW MINUTES THEY HAD CLIMBED OVER AND WERE FREE!
OH, I LEFT THE PACKAGE WITH THE EXTRA CLOTHING AND MONEY BEHIND!
NEVER MIND! THE MAIN THING IS TO GET AWAY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
JP TOURED THE COUNTRY IN DISGUISE. HE SENT PRINTED AND CYCLOSTYLED LETTERS TO FREEDOM FIGHTERS ALL OVER INDIA.
SOME OF THESE LETTERS FOUND THEIR WAY TO AN AMERICAN MILITARY INSTALLATION IN INDIA.
YOU ARE THE SOLDIERS OF A FREE COUNTRY. WE ASK YOU TO HELP US FIGHT BRITISH FASCISM . . .
THE WHOLE COUNTRY SPOKE OF JAYAPRAKASH'S BOLD ESCAPE WITH PRIDE.
A REWARD OF TWENTY-ONE THOUSAND RUPEES HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED FOR INFORMATION LEADING TO HIS ARREST.
THAT'S FOOLISH! NOBODY WOULD GIVE HIM AWAY!
JP SET UP A TRAINING CENTRE FOR REVOLUTIONARIES NEAR THE KOSI RIVER IN BIHAR. RAM MANOHAR LOHIA JOINED HIM THERE.
THE POLICE ARE ON OUR TRAIL. WE MUST GO INTO HIDING!

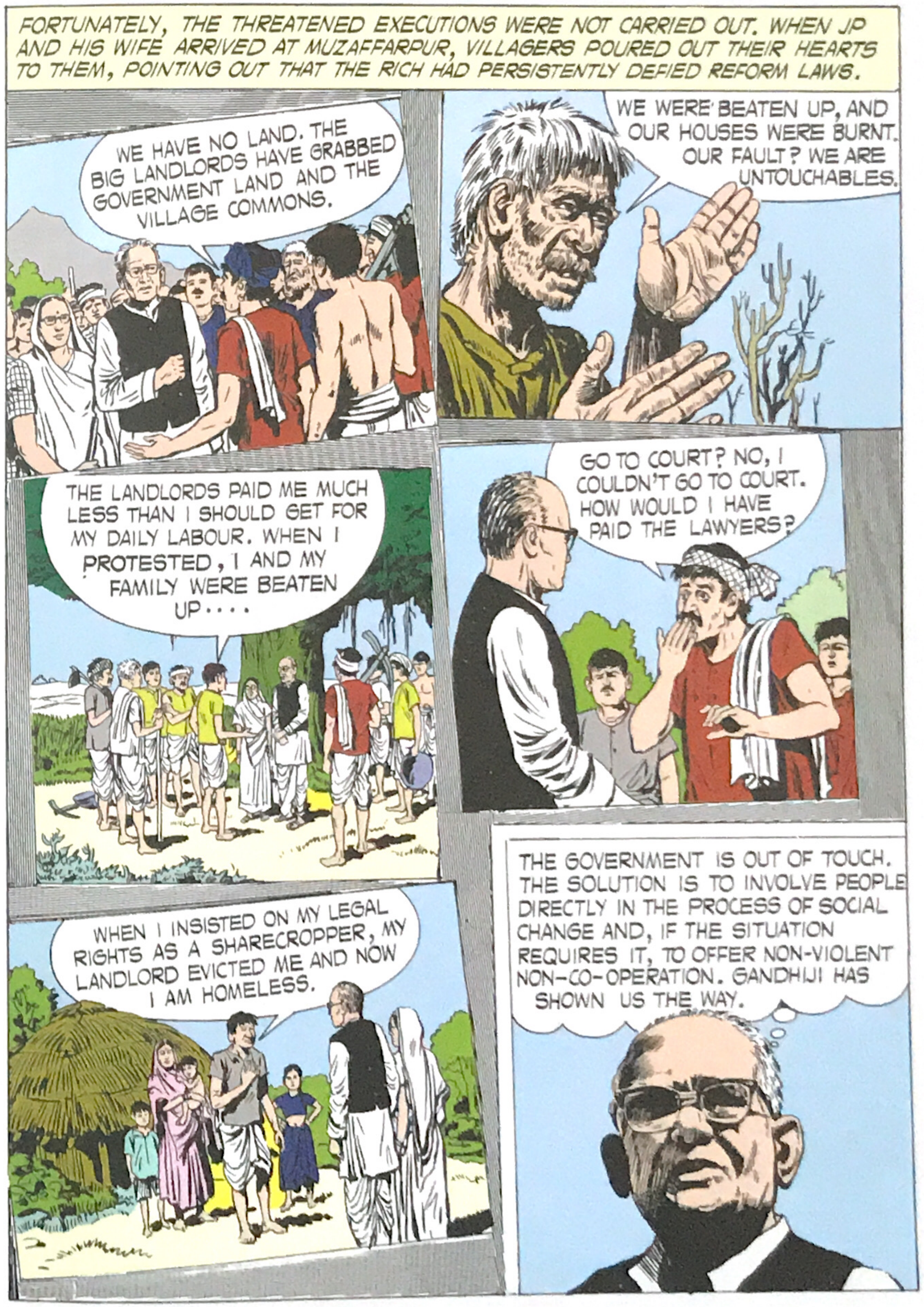
JP, WITH LOHIA AND OTHERS, TRIED TO SLIP ACROSS THE BORDER TO NEPAL, BUT THEY WERE ARRESTED BY THE NEPALESE POLICE A FEW DAYS LATER.
YOU WILL BE HANDED OVER TO THE INDIAN POLICE.
THE POLICE STATION TO WHICH THEY WERE TAKEN WAS BESIEGED BY JP'S ASSOCIATES.
RELEASE JP! RELEASE LOHIA!
IN THE ENSUING CONFUSION, JP AND LOHIA ESCAPED.
JP, I HAVE LOST MY SPECTACLES!
DON'T WORRY. HOLD MY HAND, AND I'LL GUIDE YOU.
RETURNING TO INDIA, HE RESUMED HIS REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITIES. ONCE, WHILE HE WAS TRAVELLING FROM AMRITSAR TO LAHORE, THE TRAIN WAS HALTED AT MUGHALPURA NEAR LAHORE.
WE HAVE YOU NOW! DON'T TRY TO ESCAPE, MR. NARAYAN!
JP WAS TAKEN TO LAHORE JAIL AND SUBJECTED TO ENDLESS QUESTIONING.
YOU PLANNED TO GO TO THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE TO INCITE THE PATHANS, DIDN'T YOU?
I WILL NOT ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS. I AM WORKING FOR MY COUNTRY'S INDEPENDENCE AND I WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO.

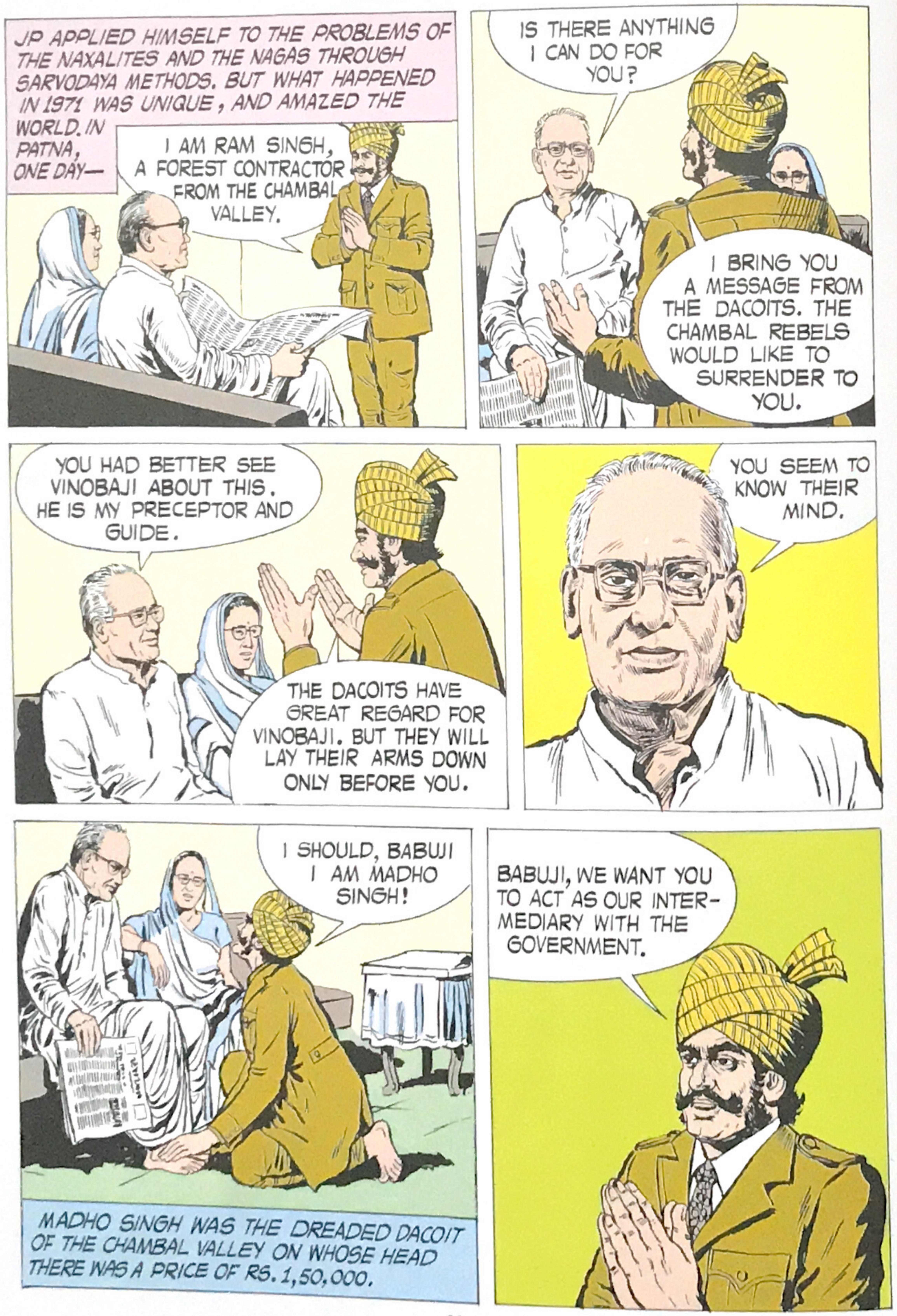

ONE DAY —
AM I SEEING THINGS? HAS MY THIRTEEN-MONTH STAY IN THIS CELL AFFECTED ME SO BADLY?
NO, JP! YOU ARE REALLY SEEING ME, RAM MANOHAR LOHIA! THEY CAUGHT UP WITH ME IN BOMBAY!
LATER, BOTH, JP AND LOHIA WERE TRANSFERRED TO AGRA JAIL. THEY WERE RELEASED IN APRIL 1946.
AGRA JAIL
LONG LIVE JAYAPRAKASH!
INDIAN YOUTH, ZINDABAD!
JP'S POPULARITY ALL OVER INDIA HAD INCREASED ENORMOUSLY. AT A MAMMOTH GATHERING, THE RENOWNED HINDI POET, DINKAR, RECITED A LONG POEM WRITTEN IN HONOUR OF JAYAPRAKASH.
JAYAPRAKASH IS THE NAME TO WHOM HISTORY GIVES RESPECT; MARKS OF WHOSE STEPS ARE PRINTED ON ITS HEART...
LONG LIVE JAYAPRAKASH!
JAYAPRAKASH ZINDABAD!
AS INDIA WENT THROUGH BREATHTAKING DEVELOPMENTS, LOHIA AND JAYAPRAKASH FELT DISSATISFIED WITH THE POLICIES OF THE SENIOR LEADERS.
NOAKHALI, DELHI, BIHAR! I CANNOT STOMACH THESE COMMUNAL RIOTS ANY MORE. I'M GOING TO RESIGN FROM THE CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE.
YOU ARE RIGHT. WE MUST FORM AN INDEPENDENT PARTY.
THE COUNTRY ATTAINED FREEDOM ON AUGUST 15, 1947. IT WAS A DAY OF HAPPINESS, YET THERE WAS SADNESS, TOO, FOR THE COUNTRY HAD BEEN PARTITIONED.
BOTH ELATION AND CELEBRATION ARE MEANINGLESS. PARTITION IS NOT WHAT WE FOUGHT FOR!

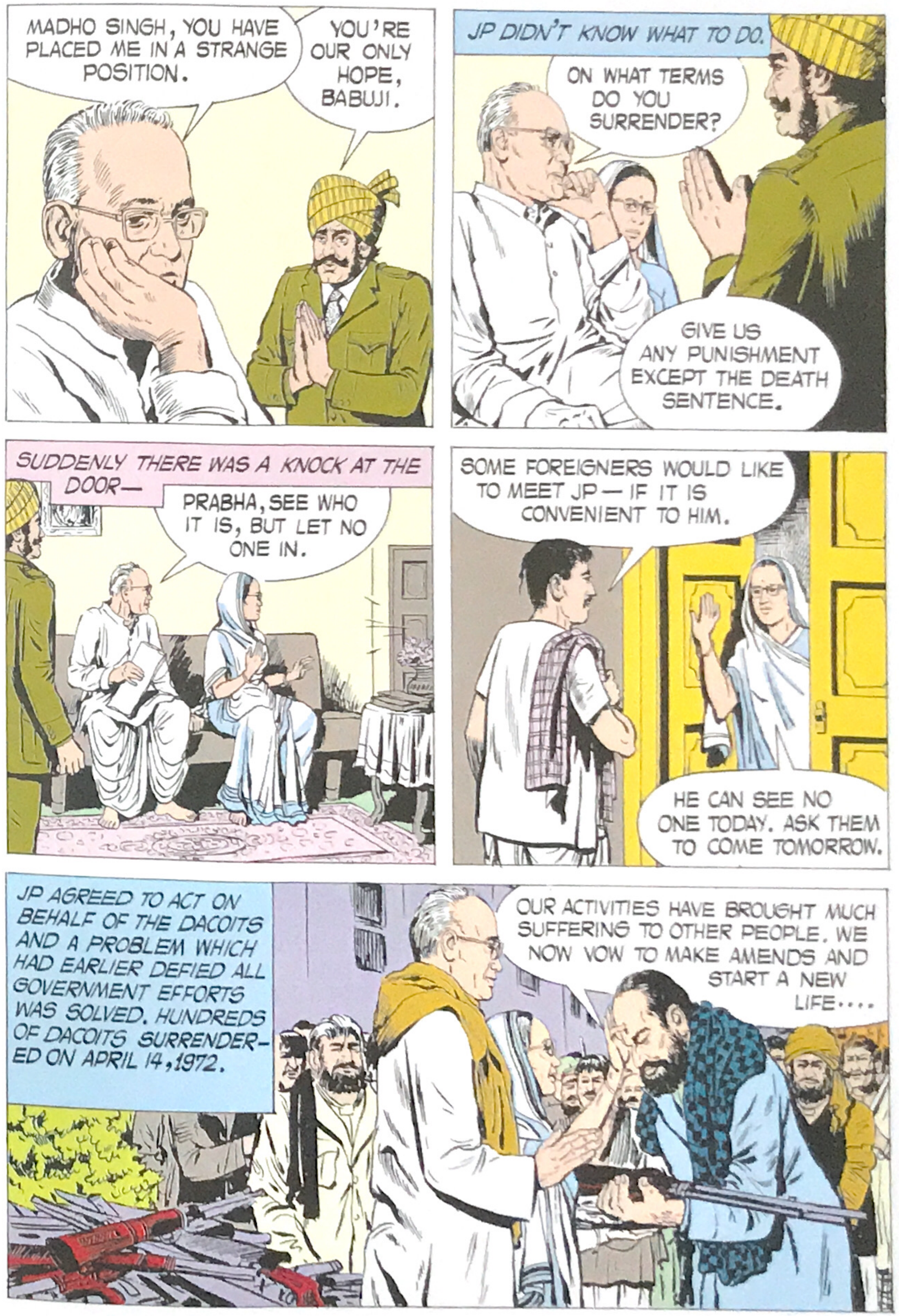

GANDHI UNDERSTOOD JP'S ANGUISH.
PRABHA, AT THIS TIME YOUR PLACE IS BY THE SIDE OF JAYAPRAKASH. YOU MUST GO TO HIM.
I WILL GO, BAPUJI.
IN THE FOLLOWING YEAR, JP AND HIS FRIENDS FORMED THE SOCIALIST PARTY, INDEPENDENT OF THE CONGRESS.
... NOW IN A FREE INDIA IT MUST BE UNDERSTOOD THAT TO BE OPPOSED TO THE CONGRESS IS NOT TO BE OPPOSED TO THE NATION, BUT RATHER TO CERTAIN POLICIES AND METHODS OF THE GOVERN-MENT....
JP PLUNGED INTO HIS WORK WITH ADDED ENTHUSIASM. ON NOVEMBER 25, 1949, HE ORGANISED AN UNPRECEDENTED DEMONSTRATION BY PEASANTS IN PATNA.
LEADER OF THE PEASANTS!
JAYAPRAKASH ZINDABAD!
IN THE GENERAL ELECTIONS OF 1952, THE SOCIALIST PARTY FARED BADLY. LATER, WHEN THE BIHAR UNIT OF THE PARTY MET—
JP WORKED COVERTLY FOR THE CONGRESS!
YES, THAT'S BECAUSE OF HIS FRIENDSHIP WITH NEHRU!
JP IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PARTY'S DEFEAT!
THE MAN WHO HAD DEDICATED HIMSELF TO HIS PARTY, COULD NOT BEAR THESE ACCUSATIONS: JP BROKE DOWN.
SOCIALIST PARTY

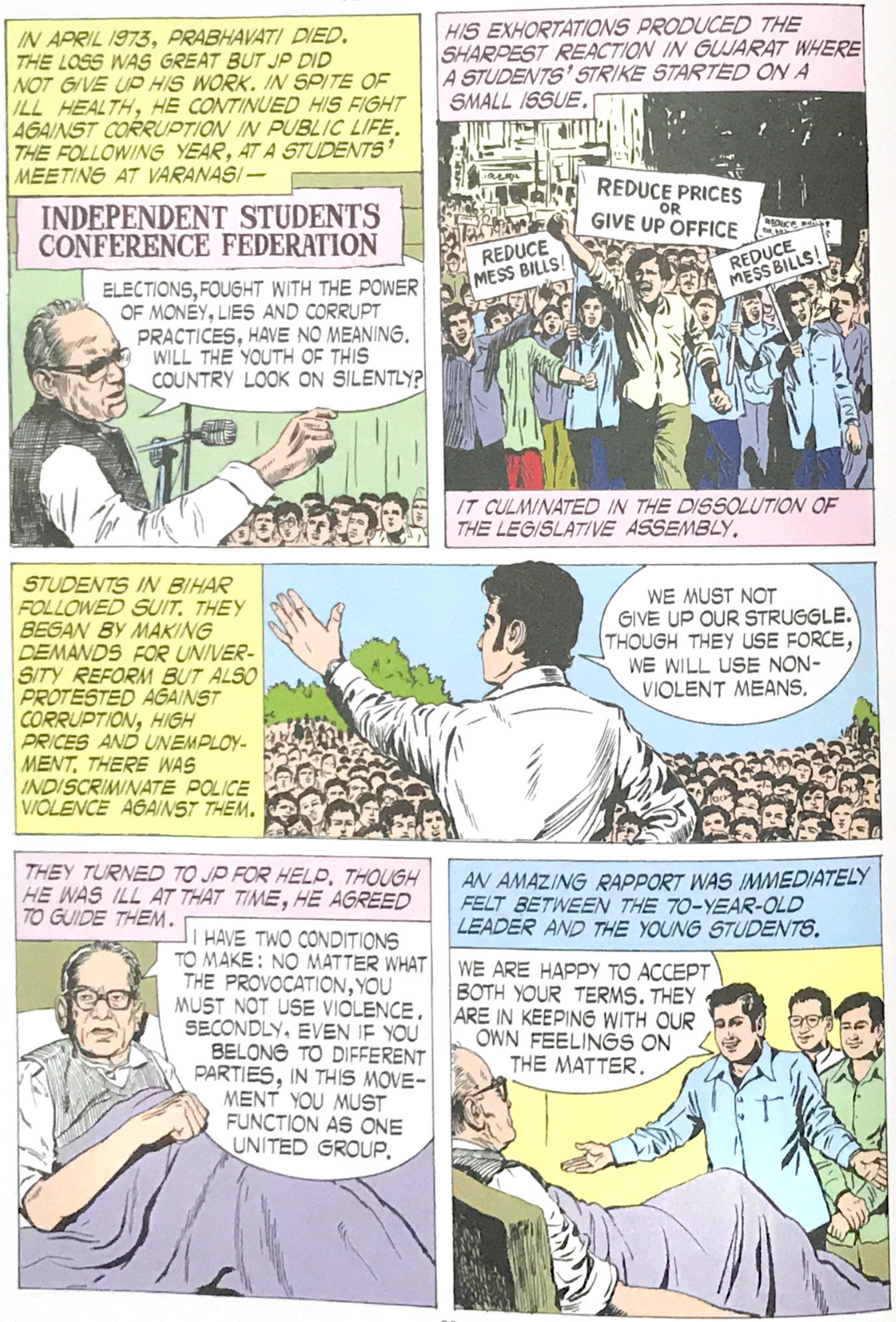

JP WITHDREW FROM ACTIVE POLITICS AND SPENT HIS TIME READING AND THINKING OVER THINGS.
THE COUNTRY IS HEADING TOWARDS A DEAD END. IF NOTHING IS DONE TO ARREST THIS DRIFT, POSTERITY WILL NOT FORGIVE US.
JP BEGAN TO TAKE AN INTEREST IN THE BHOODAN MOVEMENT LAUNCHED BY VINOBA BHAVE. THE MOVEMENT WAS AIMED AT PROVIDING LAND FOR THE LANDLESS AND PROMOTING VILLAGE DEMOCRACY.
THIS FIFTEEN-MILE WALK WITH YOU TODAY HAS SHOWN ME THE WAY.
WHAT WAY, JP?
THE WAY OF SERVICE AS APART FROM THAT OF POWER.
IN JUNE THAT YEAR, JP UNDERTOOK A TWENTY-ONE-DAY FAST BECAUSE HE FELT HE HAD LET DOWN THE POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS WORKERS TO WHOM HE HAD CONVEYED GOVERNMENT PROMISES WHICH WERE NOT KEPT. HE FELT MORALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR DISAPPOINTING THE WORKERS.
LATER, HE JOINED THE BHOODAN MOVEMENT. HE PERSUADED LAND-OWNERS TO DONATE PART OF THEIR LAND TO THE LANDLESS PEASANTS.
I DO NOT POSSESS MUCH. BUT I WILL BE GLAD TO GIVE SOME OF IT TO THOSE WHO HAVE NONE AT ALL.
FRIEND, YOU HAVE UNDERSTOOD THE MEANING OF OUR MISSION. IF ONLY RICHER LANDLORDS WOULD DO AS YOU HAVE DONE!
IN ONE WEEK JP COLLECTED PLEDGES FOR SEVEN THOUSAND ACRES OF LAND.

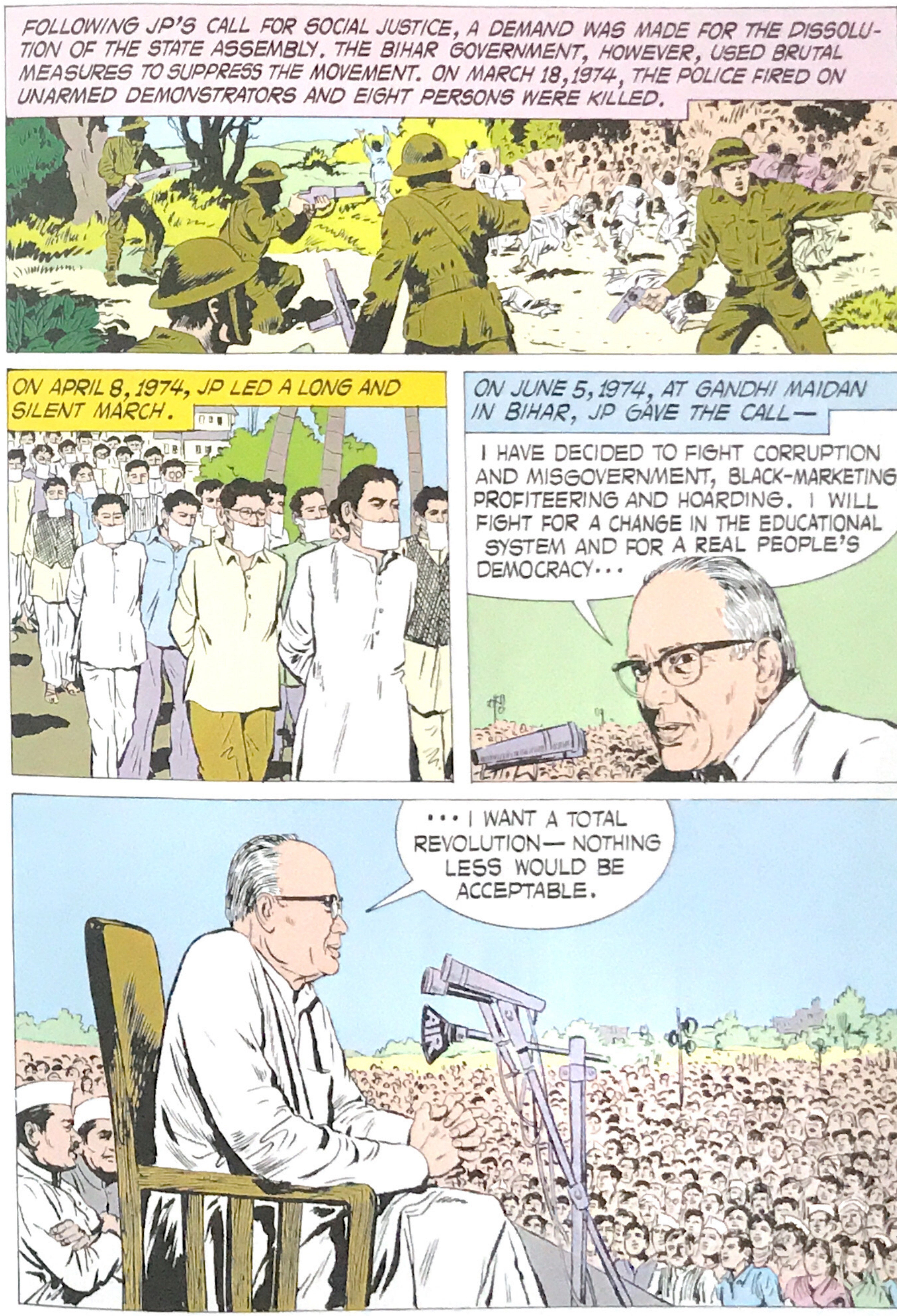

IN 1954, JP ADDRESSED A HUGE GATHERING OF SARVODAYA WORKERS —
I WANT TO ANNOUNCE TO THIS AUGUST GATHERING THAT I AM RETIRING FROM ACTIVE POLITICS. I DEDICATE THE REST OF MY LIFE TO SARVODAYA AND TO BHOODAN WORK....
NEARLY SIX HUNDRED PERSONS DECIDED TO FOLLOW HIS EXAMPLE. HE SETTLED DOWN IN AN EXTREMELY BACKWARD VILLAGE IN BIHAR. IN A FEW YEARS, THE AREA WAS TRANSFORMED. DAMS WERE DUG TO TRAP RAIN-WATER AND THEY EVEN TRIED OUT SIMPLE RURAL TECHNOLOGY AND BUILT A GOBAR-GAS PLANT.
ISN'T IT WONDERFUL TO HAVE JAYAPRAKASH DIRECTING US HERE?
YES, HE HAS GIVEN UP THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCCEEDING NEHRU, IN ORDER TO SET AN EXAMPLE OF DOING WORK AT THE GRASSROOTS LEVEL.
ALTHOUGH RESPONSE TO THE BHOODAN MOVEMENT WAS ENTHUSIASTIC AT FIRST, IT GRADUALLY BEGAN TO LOSE ITS FIRE.
WE ARE BECOMING STALE AND FLABBY OF SPIRIT. PERHAPS THIS IS BECAUSE OUR WORK INVOLVES NO DANGER TO US AND DEMANDS NO GREAT SACRIFICE.
THEN ONE DAY IN MAY 1970, HE RECEIVED A LETTER FROM MUZAFFARPUR WHICH MADE HIM ACT AT ONCE —
THE NAXALITES HAVE SERVED DEATH NOTICES ON TWO SARVODAYA WORKERS. THE EXECUTION DATES ARE THE 5TH AND 7TH OF JUNE.
PRABHA, WE WILL LEAVE FOR MUZAFFARPUR IMMEDIATELY.

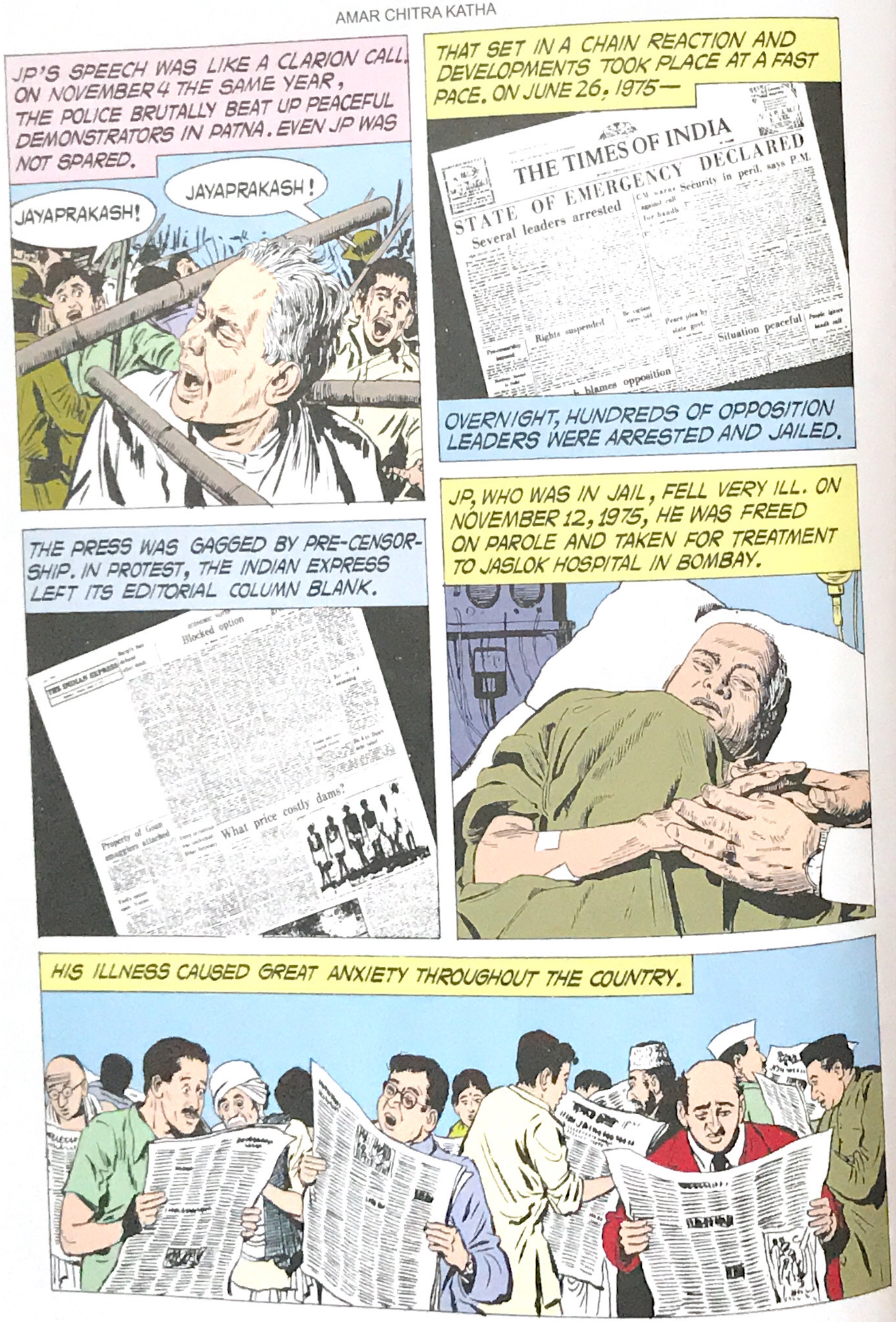

FORTUNATELY, THE THREATENED EXECUTIONS WERE NOT CARRIED OUT. WHEN JP AND HIS WIFE ARRIVED AT MUZAFFARPUR, VILLAGERS POURED OUT THEIR HEARTS TO THEM, POINTING OUT THAT THE RICH HAD PERSISTENTLY DEFIED REFORM LAWS.
WE HAVE NO LAND. THE BIG LANDLORDS HAVE GRABBED GOVERNMENT LAND AND THE VILLAGE COMMONS.
WE WERE BEATEN UP, AND OUR HOUSES WERE BURNT. OUR FAULT? WE ARE UNTOUCHABLES.
THE LANDLORDS PAID ME MUCH LESS THAN I SHOULD GET FOR MY DAILY LABOUR. WHEN I PROTESTED, I AND MY FAMILY WERE BEATEN UP....
GO TO COURT? NO, I COULDN'T GO TO COURT. HOW WOULD I HAVE PAID THE LAWYERS?
WHEN I INSISTED ON MY LEGAL RIGHTS AS A SHARECROPPER, MY LANDLORD EVICTED ME AND NOW I AM HOMELESS.
THE GOVERNMENT IS OUT OF TOUCH. THE SOLUTION IS TO INVOLVE PEOPLE DIRECTLY IN THE PROCESS OF SOCIAL CHANGE AND, IF THE SITUATION REQUIRES IT, TO OFFER NON-VIOLENT NON-CO-OPERATION. GANDHIJI HAS SHOWN US THE WAY.

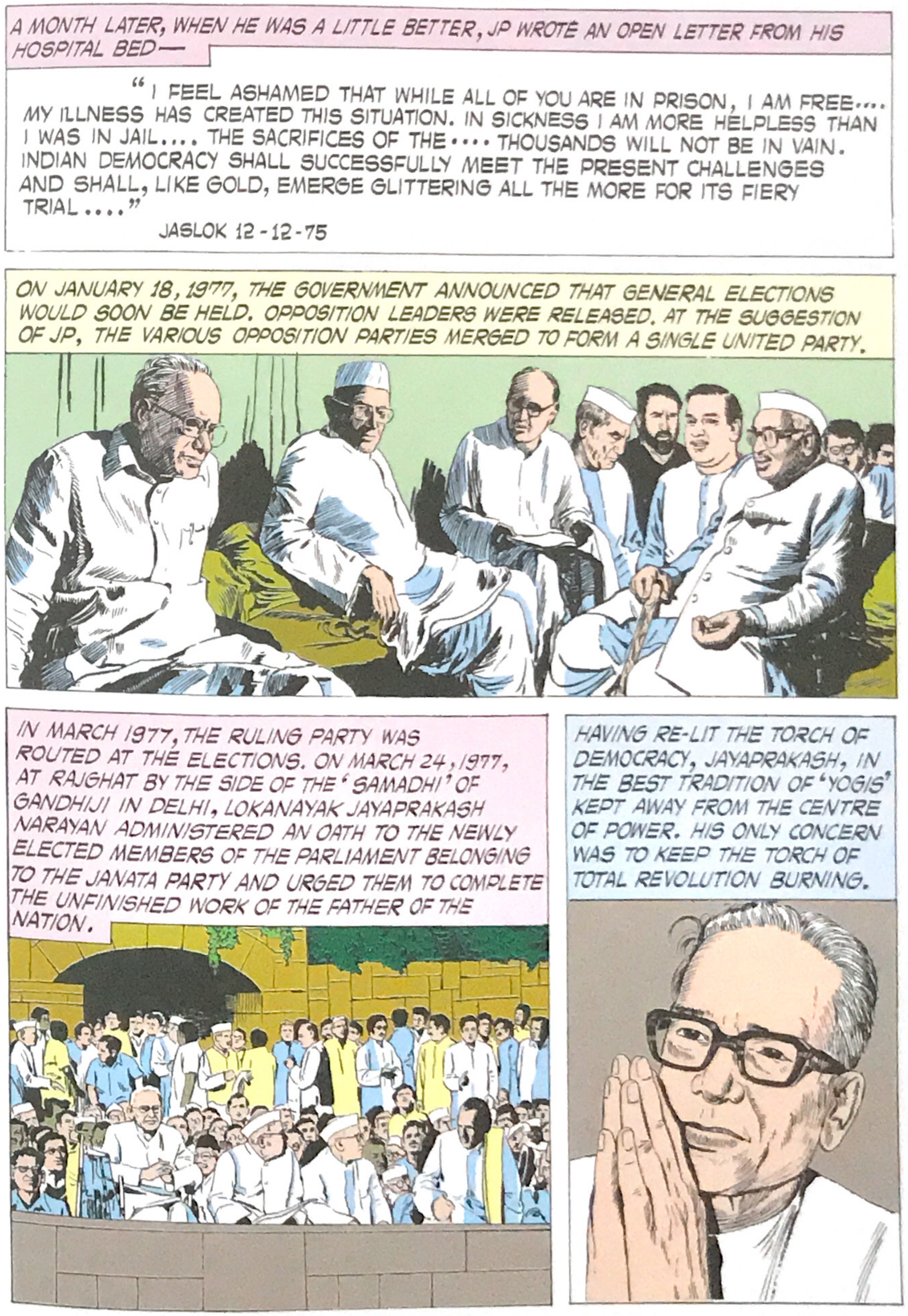

JP APPLIED HIMSELF TO THE PROBLEMS OF THE NAXALITES AND THE NAGAS THROUGH SARVODAYA METHODS. BUT WHAT HAPPENED IN 1971 WAS UNIQUE, AND AMAZED THE WORLD. IN PATNA, ONE DAY—
I AM RAM SINGH, A FOREST CONTRACTOR FROM THE CHAMBAL VALLEY.
IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN DO FOR YOU?
I BRING YOU A MESSAGE FROM THE DACOITS. THE CHAMBAL REBELS WOULD LIKE TO SURRENDER TO YOU.
YOU HAD BETTER SEE VINOBAJI ABOUT THIS. HE IS MY PRECEPTOR AND GUIDE.
THE DACOITS HAVE GREAT REGARD FOR VINOBAJI. BUT THEY WILL LAY THEIR ARMS DOWN ONLY BEFORE YOU.
YOU SEEM TO KNOW THEIR MIND.
I SHOULD, BABUJI I AM MADHO SINGH!
MADHO SINGH WAS THE DREADED DACOIT OF THE CHAMBAL VALLEY ON WHOSE HEAD THERE WAS A PRICE OF RS. 1,50,000.
BABUJI, WE WANT YOU TO ACT AS OUR INTERMEDIARY WITH THE GOVERNMENT.


MADHO SINGH, YOU HAVE PLACED ME IN A STRANGE POSITION.
YOU'RE OUR ONLY HOPE, BABUJI.
JP DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.
ON WHAT TERMS DO YOU SURRENDER?
GIVE US ANY PUNISHMENT EXCEPT THE DEATH SENTENCE.
SUDDENLY THERE WAS A KNOCK AT THE DOOR—
PRABHA, SEE WHO IT IS, BUT LET NO ONE IN.
SOME FOREIGNERS WOULD LIKE TO MEET JP — IF IT IS CONVENIENT TO HIM.
HE CAN SEE NO ONE TODAY. ASK THEM TO COME TOMORROW.
JP AGREED TO ACT ON BEHALF OF THE DACOITS AND A PROBLEM WHICH HAD EARLIER DEFIED ALL GOVERNMENT EFFORTS WAS SOLVED. HUNDREDS OF DACOITS SURRENDERED ON APRIL 14, 1972.
OUR ACTIVITIES HAVE BROUGHT MUCH SUFFERING TO OTHER PEOPLE. WE NOW VOW TO MAKE AMENDS AND START A NEW LIFE....


IN APRIL 1973, PRABHAVATI DIED. THE LOSS WAS GREAT BUT JP DID NOT GIVE UP HIS WORK. IN SPITE OF ILL HEALTH, HE CONTINUED HIS FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION IN PUBLIC LIFE. THE FOLLOWING YEAR, AT A STUDENTS' MEETING AT VARANASI—
INDEPENDENT STUDENTS CONFERENCE FEDERATION
ELECTIONS, FOUGHT WITH THE POWER OF MONEY, LIES AND CORRUPT PRACTICES, HAVE NO MEANING. WILL THE YOUTH OF THIS COUNTRY LOOK ON SILENTLY?
HIS EXHORTATIONS PRODUCED THE SHARPEST REACTION IN GUJARAT WHERE A STUDENTS' STRIKE STARTED ON A SMALL ISSUE.
REDUCE PRICES OR GIVE UP OFFICE
REDUCE MESS BILLS!
REDUCE MESS BILLS!
IT CULMINATED IN THE DISSOLUTION OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
STUDENTS IN BIHAR FOLLOWED SUIT. THEY BEGAN BY MAKING DEMANDS FOR UNIVERSITY REFORM BUT ALSO PROTESTED AGAINST CORRUPTION, HIGH PRICES AND UNEMPLOYMENT. THERE WAS INDISCRIMINATE POLICE VIOLENCE AGAINST THEM.
WE MUST NOT GIVE UP OUR STRUGGLE. THOUGH THEY USE FORCE, WE WILL USE NON-VIOLENT MEANS.
THEY TURNED TO JP FOR HELP. THOUGH HE WAS ILL AT THAT TIME, HE AGREED TO GUIDE THEM.
I HAVE TWO CONDITIONS TO MAKE: NO MATTER WHAT THE PROVOCATION, YOU MUST NOT USE VIOLENCE. SECONDLY, EVEN IF YOU BELONG TO DIFFERENT PARTIES, IN THIS MOVEMENT YOU MUST FUNCTION AS ONE UNITED GROUP.
AN AMAZING RAPPORT WAS IMMEDIATELY FELT BETWEEN THE 70-YEAR-OLD LEADER AND THE YOUNG STUDENTS.
WE ARE HAPPY TO ACCEPT BOTH YOUR TERMS. THEY ARE IN KEEPING WITH OUR OWN FEELINGS ON THE MATTER.


FOLLOWING JP'S CALL FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE, A DEMAND WAS MADE FOR THE DISSOLUTION OF THE STATE ASSEMBLY. THE BIHAR GOVERNMENT, HOWEVER, USED BRUTAL MEASURES TO SUPPRESS THE MOVEMENT. ON MARCH 18, 1974, THE POLICE FIRED ON UNARMED DEMONSTRATORS AND EIGHT PERSONS WERE KILLED.
ON APRIL 8, 1974, JP LED A LONG AND SILENT MARCH.
ON JUNE 5, 1974, AT GANDHI MAIDAN IN BIHAR, JP GAVE THE CALL—
I HAVE DECIDED TO FIGHT CORRUPTION AND MISGOVERNMENT, BLACK-MARKETING, PROFITEERING AND HOARDING. I WILL FIGHT FOR A CHANGE IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND FOR A REAL PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY...
...I WANT A TOTAL REVOLUTION— NOTHING LESS WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE.
AIR


JP'S SPEECH WAS LIKE A CLARION CALL. ON NOVEMBER 4 THE SAME YEAR, THE POLICE BRUTALLY BEAT UP PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATORS IN PATNA. EVEN JP WAS NOT SPARED.
JAYAPRAKASH!
JAYAPRAKASH!
THAT SET IN A CHAIN REACTION AND DEVELOPMENTS TOOK PLACE AT A FAST PACE. ON JUNE 26, 1975—
THE TIMES OF INDIA
STATE OF EMERGENCY DECLARED
Several leaders arrested
Situation peaceful
OVERNIGHT, HUNDREDS OF OPPOSITION LEADERS WERE ARRESTED AND JAILED.
THE PRESS WAS GAGGED BY PRE-CENSORSHIP. IN PROTEST, THE INDIAN EXPRESS LEFT ITS EDITORIAL COLUMN BLANK.
Blocked option
What price costly dams?
JP, WHO WAS IN JAIL, FELL VERY ILL. ON NOVEMBER 12, 1975, HE WAS FREED ON PAROLE AND TAKEN FOR TREATMENT TO JASLOK HOSPITAL IN BOMBAY.
HIS ILLNESS CAUSED GREAT ANXIETY THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.


A MONTH LATER, WHEN HE WAS A LITTLE BETTER, JP WROTE AN OPEN LETTER FROM HIS HOSPITAL BED—
" I FEEL ASHAMED THAT WHILE ALL OF YOU ARE IN PRISON, I AM FREE.... MY ILLNESS HAS CREATED THIS SITUATION. IN SICKNESS I AM MORE HELPLESS THAN I WAS IN JAIL.... THE SACRIFICES OF THE .... THOUSANDS WILL NOT BE IN VAIN. INDIAN DEMOCRACY SHALL SUCCESSFULLY MEET THE PRESENT CHALLENGES AND SHALL, LIKE GOLD, EMERGE GLITTERING ALL THE MORE FOR ITS FIERY TRIAL...."
JASLOK 12-12-75
ON JANUARY 18, 1977, THE GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED THAT GENERAL ELECTIONS WOULD SOON BE HELD. OPPOSITION LEADERS WERE RELEASED. AT THE SUGGESTION OF JP, THE VARIOUS OPPOSITION PARTIES MERGED TO FORM A SINGLE UNITED PARTY.
IN MARCH 1977, THE RULING PARTY WAS ROUTED AT THE ELECTIONS. ON MARCH 24, 1977, AT RAJGHAT BY THE SIDE OF THE 'SAMADHI' OF GANDHIJI IN DELHI, LOKANAYAK JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN ADMINISTERED AN OATH TO THE NEWLY ELECTED MEMBERS OF THE PARLIAMENT BELONGING TO THE JANATA PARTY AND URGED THEM TO COMPLETE THE UNFINISHED WORK OF THE FATHER OF THE NATION.
HAVING RE-LIT THE TORCH OF DEMOCRACY, JAYAPRAKASH, IN THE BEST TRADITION OF 'YOGIS' KEPT AWAY FROM THE CENTRE OF POWER. HIS ONLY CONCERN WAS TO KEEP THE TORCH OF TOTAL REVOLUTION BURNING.